THE FUNNY MAG

SATHARAM

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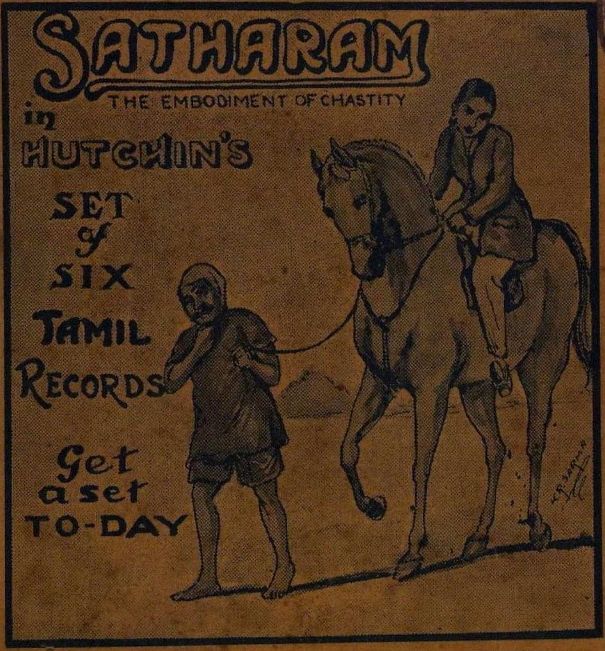

Thrilling from start to finish.

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20th September 1935 **Single Copy: As. 1-6.**

S. BRAHMA

THE FUNNY MAGZIN OF INDIA.

ISSUED EVERY 5th & 20th OF THE MONTH

RATES OF SUBSCRIPTION.

	Inland	Foreign.
ANNUAL (24 issues)	Rs. 2—0—0	4—0—0
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TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

Only articles of a humorous nature *originally written* and *certified as such by the contributor* may be sent. *Copied articles or Slightly garbled ones need not be sent.* All manuscripts should bear the name and address of the contributor written in a prominent place. The manuscripts must be either typed or legibly written on one side of the paper with plenty of space between lines for editorial corrections if any. After the Editor has finished considering the articles rejected manuscripts will be returned if they are accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope. The Editor does not hold himself responsible for the loss of any. Contributions must be addressed to :—Editor, Funny Magzin.

Articles and Cartoons appearing in the FUNNY Magzin become the sole and permanent copyright of the publishers.

Advertisement Rates will be sent on application.

Telephone No. 3005.
Telegrams: "ANANDA BODHINI," MADRAS.

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"FUNNY" the Best Seller.

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THE FUNNY MAG

PUBLISHED ON THE 5TH & 20TH OF EVERY MONTH.

Vol III. | MADRAS, 20th SEPTEMBER 1935. | No. 4.

" THE LADY RECEIVING THE KISS "

FUNZIN'S FORTNIGHTLY COCKTAIL

Valuable Book on careers given away free to those with 'ambition.'' Read the book and be cured of the 'ambition'

* * *

"I was just speechless, the first time I stood on a platform" confesses an orator.

That his knees never knocked at each other is a matter for consolation.

* * *

"Increase your stock of words" advises an English Professor.

One way is to have your fill in a hotel and tell the proprietor you have lost your purse and listen carefully.

* * *

"Free Dog Advice" runs an advertisement.

The pity is whether the dogs get interested in the advice.

* * *

"My husband proposed to me in Africa" says a girl.

Heat drives a man mad.

* * *

"There has been a steady decline in string Industry:" complains a merchant.

Of course thread merchants must be feeling unstrung.

* * *

"English and Russian scientists agree to co-operate" says a headline.

They mean operate against each other.

* * *

'Pasting posters on pavements is a novelty" suggests an expert.

Men put their feet on it.

* * *

"What do you think of thieves who broke into a hotel the other night" asks a friend.

Why! Smash and grub raid of course.

* * *

"A Jew was hauled up recently for making love to a civilian's wife" says a headline in a daily.

"It's force of habit I call it. Money lender making his advances.

* * *

"A Railway ticket collector is taking Booking lessons."

Fairly experienced in punching.

* * *

Recently a man extinginshed a fire with a tankard of home made beer.

The one and the only way to use it!

* * *

"Wash your stomach clean" warns a doctor.

The thing is he never mentioned the soap.

* * *

"Can you tell me things that are never satisfied" asks a reader.

Women of course.

* * *

"I like drawing trees" writes a student on an Art College.

But many prefer to draw cheques.

* * *

"When the boss questioned him suddenly about the accounts the cashier fainted," says a headline.

The Blighter had a faint idea.

* * *

"Stammering. Particulars free" We only wonder if any one is interested in stammering.

* * *

"How to stop smoking. Genuine Remedy" reads an advertisement.

One way is to smoke an indian Beedi.

* * *

Height increase guaranteed. 14 days or money back.

And propably grow shorter on the 15th day.

* * *

"The vicar's choice. Three nuns." reads an advertisement.

That's too bad of the vicar.

* * *

"Why is It so much better" asks a manufacturer of one of his products.

Whoever said it is better.

* * *

"Eat plenty of bread for energy" advices a doctor.

We want plenty of energy to eat the bread supplied to us.

* * *

"Open your cigarette-packet with a zip" reads an advertisement.

My tradesman insists on paying 3 annas first.

* * *

"Club Agents wanted" advertises a firm.

I wonder whom they want to club.

* * *

"What do you dream?" questions a book publisher. Why, everything that is impossible.

* * *

"Tell your own future" reads an advertisement.

If only we succeeded.

* * *

"Your fortune from the stars. £750 cash to be won" reads an advertisement.

A rank lie I call it. Stars receive a fortune—they don't give it.

* * *

"Our Gang's corner. For junior readers" reads a line in a magazine.

We thought gangs and gangsters existed in Chicago!

* * *

"20 years of indigestion cured at once."

The only cure. Sudden death.

* * *

"The best tricks and how them."

Sounds tricky!

*

By M. V. Mathew

HAVE you a deceased wife, or a wealthy uncle? A pet dog, whose life is insured? A book that's worth twice chewing up? or a pencil to be pensioned off? And above all, do you ever contemplate of dying? By Gosh, if there is any really URGENT need, please put in your application. I have some ready-made epitaphs, which will fit every pocket, every purse, and every person. Ask for a demonstration from your nearest dealer; that is from me, and make haste, lest I run short of my stock.

HERE ARE A FEW SAMPLES:—

1. To *Mister Miser*.
   Herein rests much-honoured Pierse;
   His grave made clean by many
   Who sobbed and washed it with their tears,
   And so become his kins; ah, canny!
   Modest Pierse loved and laved neat;
   But he lived in such a way, I own,
   That after he died, and left his seat,
   E'en the undertaker was forced to moan!

2. To *The Memory of The Funny Boss*.
   Here sleeps the Boss of Gerald Sluss
   (Who never took more than a lady's leave)
   And the boss, in his funny sleeve,
   Called him, 'microphyllous.'

3. To *The Golden Memory Of The Wise Nurse*.
   Lies here the wise nurse, Mrs Glegg;
   Powerless to stop the screaming child,
   Got out of her wits, and then got wild,
   And tried to put in its mug, an egg!

4. *Remember Hasty Miss Stum.*
   Heave a sigh for the good young girl,
   Who loved a German Earl;
   The maid of hers one day told Stum,
   Herr Geutich, the Earl, was come.

5. *ODE to a Walking-Stick.*
   Take your kerchief, and wipe your tear;
   For here is the good old walking-stick
   Of the hundred-summer-old Ben Dick;
   When his wife bade him to fling it off,
   He said, "It ain't old as I, my dear,
   So think of me and its epitaph."

6. *For Nephews And Nieces Only.*
   This is the grave of 'my' uncle dear;
   Who was glad enough to hear,
   That to me, he could well sell off
   His thousands, for this epitaph.

7. To *Commemorate The Death Of The Donor Of My First And Only Genuine Kiss.*
   Here lies the fractured Swan-Ink-Pot,
   With the honour, on it I've wrought;
   He found his smashing death, by kissing my head,
   When my wife threw him, as she was contradicted

8. *The Editor.*
   Weep, dear readers, for our good Editor,
   Who unto his grave, once gladly ran.
   It seems, he said a violent "ditto!"
   When his wife said, *You* ain't a man.

ABOUT THAT DOG

[WE regret to observe, that the stories and sketches we receive, are some of them so bad, that we propose to publish from time to time, selections from the works of famous authors which we hope will serve as models, for our own writers. The following delightful little piece, is from the pen of that classical humorist—M a r k Twain.]

This was the cause of all trouble:—

"Lost on the 10th instant, a small Terrier Dog, with a brass collar upon his neck, and the tip of his tail gone. Answers to the name of "Jack." Five dollars reward will be given to the person who returns him to M. T. M. No. 84, Rickety Row.

I inserted the above in the *Daily Flip flap*, in the hope that I might recover the animal, to which I was much attached.

The *Flip flap* goes to press at five A. M.

At half-past six I was awakened by a pull at my door-bell. I got up and opened the window. As I looked out I saw a man standing in my front yard with a mongrel dog tied to a rope. He gazed up and observed :—

"HELLO! Are you the fellow who lost a dog?"

"Yes, I am."

"Well, then, I've fetched him," said the man.

I then explained to this wretched human being that my dog was a terrier, while his looked more like a lot of wood with half the bark off, and propped up on four sticks, than a dog of any kind.

"Well, ain't you a-going to take him?"

"I wouldn't have him as a gift. And I want you to move off now, or I'll call the police."

"Now, I guess you think you're smart, don't you? I'd bust you over the jaw for five cents, I would. You don't know a good dorg when you see him, you don't," and he went out, after ripping the palings off the fence.

In about a half hour there was

another ring at the bell.

I went down.

There was a man with six dogs, of a variety of breeds.

"Wh-wh-which of em's him, b-b-boss?" said this fellow, for he stuttered as if he would strangle on a small syllable.

"Neither of them."

"Y-you said his n-na-name was J-Jack, d-didn't you?'

"Yes, that's it."

"W-well then, wh-wh-what d'ye call th'that?" says he, as he sang out "Jack," and the whole six dogs looked up and wagged their tails like a lot of spavined oxen in fly time.

"Why, I call it confounded nonsense to expect me to take the whole six dogs because they're named Jack. I don't want to start a sausage mill, you understand. Mince-meat isn't in my line."

"W-w-w well, ain't you going to take?"

"Certainly not; do your suppose I am a gibbering idiot?"

"W-w-w-well. You sh-sha'n't have him now if you want him. I w-w-wouldn't trust a decent d-d-dog with a m-m-man like you anyway." And the six canines fell into line, and trotted down the street after him.

I had not got fairly into the house before there was another ring. Seedy-looking man with a semi-decayed yellow dog. His ribs stuck out so, that he looked as if he had gorged himself with a spiral spring.

"You advertise for a dog, I believe. Well, I caught him around here in the alley, after a despetate struggle. Fine dog, sir."

"Well, I don't think he is. He

looks to me as if he wasn't well. He is too ethereal for this world, young man, depend up it."

"Not at all, sir. Only shedding his coat Sir; all good dogs do at this time of the year. See that, Sir" said this seedy Caucasian, holding the dog by the scruff of the neck. "See how he yelps; that's a sign of pluck; that dog would fight a million wild-cats, he would and lick 'em too, Sir."

"Get out!" I exclaimed; and the dog put his tail between his legs and ran for the gate.

"See that, sir? see that?" said the man, as he seized him, "that a sign he's well trained; no raw dog behaves like that, I want you to know. Now s'pose you fork out that five."

Not much! I don't want him my friend."

"You won't do it? Well, than take him for seventy-five cents, and say no more about it. You'll never get another such a chance."

"I tell you I won't have him."

"Well, don't then," said the man as he kicked the animal over on my flower-pots and broke three of them, while the brute dashed madly down the middle of the street.

Just then a big ruffian in a slouched hat came up with a bull-dog, sprung in the knees and lamenting the entire loss of his tail.

When the ruffian spoke to him he wagged the whole of the last half of him.

"I've brought that there dog," was the observation made by the ruffian, and I'll finger them there, stamps, I reckon."

"My friend," said I, "that is not my dog"

"Yes, it is, though."

"But it is not."

"Din't I tell you it is? Did n't you say the tip of his tail was gone? Well, just look at him, will you?"

"Well, I won't have him, anyhow."

"You want to cheat me, do you? I'll fix you. S-Sick him, Bull!" Said this outrageous ruffian, as the dog flew at me, giving me barely time to get inside and shut the door on his frontispiece. I guess I sequeezed the nose off that dog. But the man cursed me about five minutes, and then flung a brick at the door and went away.

In less than twenty minutes another ring. Small pock-marked man in a red shirt this time. And a speckled dog that looked as if he had been out without an umbrella when it was raining ink. Says this victim of the small-pox:—

"You know that dog you advertised for, well, here he is."

"Oh, pshaw!" said I, "you know that isn't my dog."

"Your name is Quill, ai'nt it?"

"It is," said I.

"Well, then this here is the dog. He's the best ratter you ever seen Sling them around like he was amusin himself, he does, and—"

"But he is not my dog."

And he's a bully watch-dog. Look at him! Look at him now,—he is watching now! Why, he'll sit there and watch and watch, until he goes stone blind, he will. He'll watch all night if you only let him. You never see a watcher like him. I'll just chain him up while you go in and get the V."

"No, you needn't," said I. I'll blow his brains out if you don't take him away."

"Well, say, stranger, I'm a little strapped to-day; Just lend me five on him till morning, will you? I'll pay you to-morrow."

"See here, now, you just get out of here, or I'll take the hide off of you," I said, for I began to get excited, you, know.

"Aw! You ain't worth a cent, you actually ain't," said the pock-marked man, as he walked off, after clipping the dog over the head with one of my fence-pailings, and then putting his fingers up to his nose.

Not a minute after up comes a man with a mastiff as big as a small horse.

"Say, boss, I want that five," was all he remarked by way of introducing the subject.

"Well, you can't get it; and if you don't leave I'll call the police," I exclaimed, in despair.

"Watch him, zip!" said the man, instantly; and the dog flew at me, threw me down, and bit a slice of muscle out of my leg and disfigured my nose for life

Then the assassin who owned him called him off and went away laughing.

I didn't answer any more rings that day, but about four o'clock in the afternoon I looked out of the second storey window, and the yard was full of men with all kinds of dogs,—black dogs, white dogs, yellow dogs, variegated dogs, flea-bitten dogs, with tails, dogs without tails, rat-terriers, bull-pups, poodles, fox hounds, spaniels, Newfoundlands, m i x e d breeds, pointers, setlers, and a multitude of other varieties, all growling, yelping barking, snapping and jumping about until there wasn't a flower-pot left in the place, and the noise was worse than a menagerie at meal-time.

I haven't got my dog yet. I don't want him either. I don't care if I never see another dog between this and the silent grave.

The Briefless Barrister

An attorney was taking a turn,
In shabby habiliments drest;
His coat it was shockingly worn,
And the rust had invested his rest.

His breeches had suffered a breach,
His linen and worsted were worse;
He had scarce a whole crown in his hat,
And not half-a-crown in his purse.

And thus as he wandered along,
A cheerless and comfortless elf,
He sought for relief in a song,
Or complainingly talked to himself—

" Unfortunate man that I am!
I've never a client but grief:
The case is I've no case at all,
And in brief, I've ne'er had a brief.

I've waited and waited in vain,
Expecting an opening to find,
Where an honest young lawyer might gain
Some reward for the toil of his mind.

'Tis not that I am wanting in law,
Or lack an intelligent face,
That others have cases to plead,
While I have to plead for a case.

Oh, how can a modest young man
E'er hope for the smallest profession,—
The profession's already so full
Of lawyers so full of profession!"

While thus he was strolling around
His eye accidentally fell
On a very deep hole in the ground,
And he sighed to himself, " It is well!"

To curb his emotions, he sat
On the curbstone the space of a minute,
Then cried, " Here's an opening at last!"
And in less than a Jiffy was in it!

Next morning twelve citizens came
('Twas the coroner bade them attend),
To the end that it might be determined
How the man had determined his end!

" The man was a lawyer, I hear,"
Quoth the foreman blowing his nose,
" A lawyer? Alas!" said another,
" Undoubtedly died of remorse!"

A third said, " I knew the deceased,
An attorney well versed in the laws,
And as to the cause of his death,
'Twas no doubt for the want of a cause."

The Jury decided at length,
After solemnly weighing the matter,
" That the lawyer was drowned, because
He could not keep his head above water!"

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Do not allow your most priceless possession, namely your glorious tresses, to become dry, thin, lifeless and bald. It is needless. Use our renowned **Shakunthala Hair Oil** and prevent it. This oil softens the scalp and nourishes the hair roots and brings about a luxurious growth of hair. It is of pleasing fragrance and is cooling to the brain. Use this oil for your hair and for your bath and you'll be convinced of its certain cure of baldness, thinness, skin trouble and brain debility. Numerous testimonials.

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NEW CATALOGUE FREE

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Head Office:— 43, Byragimatam St., Post Box No. 203, MADRAS.

BE QUICK TO WIN Rs. 1,000

Entries close positively on the 20th September '35. *Results will be announced within one week.*

FIRST PRIZE Rs. 700 **Rs. 50** For sender of largest number of entries. **SECOND PRIZE Rs. 250**

ENTRANCE FEE Re. 1/- per entry By M. O. only.

All you have to do is to select two out of the 28 KEY-WORDS given below for each of the 7 undergiven Indian towns. For Example the first named "MADRAS" is made up of the KEY-WORDS numbers "12" & "21" i.e., "DAS"& 'RAM.' Do the remaining 6 in the same way and writing only the numbers of the two KEY-WORDS against the name of each town on a plain paper send it together with the requisite fee of Re 1/- per entry.

NAMES OF THE TOWNS.

1. MADRAS 2. NAGPUR 3. PESHAWAR 4. KASHMERE 5. CAWNPORE 6. BANGALORE 7. AMRITSAR

KEY-WORDS.

1. NAGAL	2. PAN	3. HERE	4. RACE	5. BANO	6. LANGA	7. PAWS
8. MAKE	9. ART	10. WARN	11. RUG	12. DAS	13. POWN	14. MASK
15. BORE	16. MART	17. HEAR	18. WASH	19. ROBE	20. REGAL	21. RAM
22. REAP	23. ARM	24. TIRSA	25. COPE	26. MISRA	27. SHER	28. SARI

RULES & CONDITIONS

Any number of entries may be sent on plain paper but each entry must accompany the requisite fee of Re 1/-. Postal M. O. Receipt and a stamped self-addressed envelope must be sent with the entry. In case of ties the prize will be divided equally. The prize amount will be increased according to the number of entries received and vice versa. The correct solution is that which agrees with the sealed KEY-Solution deposited with "FUNNY MAGAZINE of INDIA" Madras. In all matters concerning this competition the Manager's decision shall be final and legally binding on all concerned and this is the express condition of the entry.

The Manager (Competition Department)

THE EXPERT PUBLICITY CORPORATION, Delhi (2)

RS. 1,000 FOR "U" IN THIS SIMPLE "GIVE & TAKE" COMPETITION.

First Prize Rs. 600. Second Prize Rs. 250. Rs. 100 for the largest number of Entries

Last posting date 30-9-35. **Entrance fee Re. 1 per entry.** *Result on 10-10-35.*

No.	Directions	Words.	Meanings.
1	TAKE ...	MATTURE	Fully digested
2	GIVE ...	FORD	To Exhaust
3	TAKE ...	MEERE	Pure
4	GIVE ...	AW	The cry of a crow
5	TAKE ...	PROGROM	Destruction
6	GIVE ...	NOL	The top of the head
7	TAKE ...	COWL	A living being
8	GIVE ...	AY	A low Islet. (ISLET

HOW TO WIN

Here are 8 words each of which has either one letter more or one letter less. By the side of each word there is a direction and the meaning If the direction is "Take" you will have to take a letter out but if it is. "Give" you will have to add one letter to get the given meaning. For Example No. 1 is "MATURE" which satisfies the given meaning "Fully Digested."

Rules and Conditions :—Any number of entries may be sent on plain paper with the requsite fee of Re 1 per entry. Postal M. O. Receipt and a self-addressed stamped envelope for the result must be sent with your entry. In case of ties the amount will be equally divided. The prize amount will be increased or decreased in proportion to the number of entries received. The correct Solution is one which tallies with the sealed Key Solution deposited with the Editor "Funny Magazine" of India. The Manager's decision in all matters relating to this Competition shall be final and legally binding on all concerned and is the express condition of the entry.

THE DELHI PUZZLES SYNDICATE, *3, Chandni Chowk, Delhi.*

Reminiscences of a Crow

By T. V. R. JAM.

I wonder if at any previous age in the long history of the world has there been such a large number of unemployed youths as we have to-day. Strapping young men of brilliant parts, these. Every one of these fellows is endowed with fine qualities of head and heart and all that sort of thing. Yet, do you know what they do ? Poor dears. Sending applications to this officer and that. If this is not prostitution of talent, I should like to know what is.

Wise men, and wiseacres too, commissions and committees, have tried to solve this problem. It has been their lot to try and try in vain. The other day, a bird whispered in my ear that the redoubtable knight of Allahabad has brought from England a "cure" for this evil. Immediately I smelt a rat. After spending years of careful thought I have perfected a remedy ; and if I don't announce it to an eagerly expectant world now, Sir Tej may steal a march over me.

BELIEVE me, I have put this panacea to a thousand tests. And on no single occasion has it failed me. Vulgar people have called this in the past by such names as "toadyism," "sycophantism" and so on. But no phrase describes this most efficacious cure for unemployment so compendiously and so admirably as "crow-catching."

Yes, dear readers, crow-catching is my solution. You exercise the grey matter just a wee bit, and you will realise that this is the "open-sesame" to all kinds of success in this world—distinctions in examinations, luck in lotteries, roping in sons-in-law, securing jobs, promotions in service etc.

Isn't there something very expressive about this beautiful phrase "crow-catching" ? I should like to see the bloke who coined it—must be one of those savants "with a heart as big as a cocoanut" and a cerebrum of the size of a pumpkin. If ever anything deserved to be called an ART it is crow-catching. Has any one of you tried to crow-catch ? I refer not to the figurative crow-catching, say of the Editor by the contributors. I mean crow-catching literally.

I tried it when I was in my teens. My word ! what a job it was ! If there was a Bowley or Robertson watching my operations, I am sure he would have arrived at the following figures

"*Out-lay*—A billion tons of cooing, wooing, coaxing and cajoling.

Net return—One crow."

I grant that there are many things in this world which are extremely difficult to catch, the terrorist, for example. But catching crows is an entirely different affair. It is something unique. You can catch a thousand Arsene Lupins, I bet, before you catch a single crow. It is more elusive than the proverbial eel.

Yes, I attribute my present mastery of this great art to my early training. No get-rich-quick affair with Jam, you know. No pains, no gains are wise words. Ten long years were spent in the assiduous practice of catching crows. But you are seriously mistaken if you imagine that Jam has any cause to regret it.

You have only to come with me one evening to the park, and you will see the black birds coming to me in their thousands ; in fact it is *they* who woo me now. A couple of them are perched on my head. A few favourites plume themselves, delightfully sitting on my shoulders. And as I walk back home hundreds of them cluster round me. My pals have ceased calling me a crow-catcher; 'CROW' is their word now. Small wonder then, isn't it, that everybody from the editors of magazines down to Maharajahs of Native States are under my hypnotic spell.

Fellows who came to scoff have remained to pray. Last year I gave the first lesson in crow-catching to a gentleman in Cochin; and would you believe me, he has become a member of the Syndicate, and is moving the powers that be to institute a course on crow-catching in the University. From next year onwards there will be Bachelors in crow-catching. B C.C. D.C C & so on The syllabus has been prepared. To those who are thinking of a gilt-edged investment, let me say, that "Jam's crow-catching Publications Company Ltd." is as safe as the Bank of England.

Ten years ago, your humble servant was living in one of the hovels in the alleys of Calcutta. Today you see him gaily strutting about in his plus fours. Opposite his mansion in Dalhousie square you see queves of people lining up, eagerly waiting to catch a glimpse of Mr. Jam.

You can't apply the same methods to all cases. The student who is eager to 'crow' the professor, the clerk who will give anything to win the love of his boss, the adolescent who is dying for a kind look from his sweetheart—these are all in the same boat ; but the *modus operandi* differs in each case. Mr. Jam will initiate you into some of these mysteries—of course, for a consideration.

———

The Prince of Yercaud

By R. Meenakshi Sundaram.

SCENE 2. TIME:—MORNING.

The central half of a big bungalow at Adyar.

[The unconscious Mr. Sundram, dressed up like a Prince, is discovered sleeping. On either side of the couch, Krishnamurthi and Raghavachari dressed as servants are standing, vigorously fanning. Other students dressed likewise as the Prince's various retinue are standing about in groups and whispering. Narayanasami is moving about, giving instructions.]

[Enter Mr. Ganesan]

Ganes:—(Surveying the whole scene) Marvellous, my boys! Looks like a scene from the Arabian nights. I wonder how the poor chap would feel when he wakes up and finds himself transformed into a Prince.

Nara:—(examining the still unconscious figure on the couch). It is now more than twelve hours and, he ought to be getting up. I am sure we are all anxiously waiting for his Tutorial Highness to open his eyes!

Ganes:—I say Kittu, both of you, keep standing there and mind, don't utter a syllable. Let him fret and fume—keep mum—but if he attempts to run away or does anything rash, just come along and tell me.

Raghava:—I say, we have been on our legs since eight yesterday night and we are literally dying of fatigue. Why not we break our fast before His Highness gets up? And, when we do we go off duty?

Nara:—Don't you worry, I will send some one to relieve you. Take care.

[All go out except the two sentinels].

Krish:—This is indeed capital fun! What do you say?

Raghava:—Say? I have'nt seen, or heard the like of it. This is quite an original joke.

[Mr. Sundaram slowly regains consciousness].

Krish:—Hush—he is coming round. Give him a fine military salute—like this—when he gets up.

(Mr. Sundaram slowly rises. The two sentries salute. Mr. Sundaram surveys the scene and looks bewildered).

Mr. R. M.:—My God, where am I and what is all this? (Looks at his image in a mirror) Surely, I never had these glittering rings or these necklaces of pearl! Why, there is even a crown here! Is it also for me? (Puts it on his head, looks into the mirror and laughs). I am sure it must be a dream

—and a very pleasant one too—that I have unwittingly disturbed by getting up too soon. I shall sleep again and enjoy the rest of it! (Advances towards the couch). Have I been sleeping all along in this beautiful bed? (Examining the cot). What a fine specimen? What splendid workmanship! How exquisitely carved! Let me consciously enjoy it! (Lies down for a minute—getting up suddenly). But this is no dream! (Pinches himself). I am certainly wide awake and in full possession of all my faculties. (Looking round). This seems to be a grand Durbar Hall! (Looks at one of the oil-paintings on the wall). Who is that? Let me see. "Prince Sir Jayachandra Krishna Singh Bahadur IV, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., O.B.E., Prince of Yercaud. 1923-27." Prince of Yercaud! Goodness gracious! But is there a Prince of that name? I thought Yercaud was a hill station somewhere! But what has Yercaud to do with me, and how did I come here? Let me see—I attended the function yesterday evening and then...then...went home...no—did I? I don't remember—(Pause) Aha—could this be...but they were very kind to me yesterday? (Addressing the sentries). Look here, where am I, and who are you? (Krishnamurthy and Raghavachari salute and stand at attention). Why don't you say something? Are you bereft of speech? Can you hear? (shouts) I say—whose palace is this and why am I here? Say something—man—and don't blink like an idiot! You dirty scoundrels—I will wring your greasy necks!

Raghava:—Your Serene Highness—the Dewan has ordered us not to speak—lest we disturb your Majesty!

Mr. R. M.—(Confounded) What? Dewan? Highness! Did you say—"Majesty"? Do you refer to me? My God! (Pause) where is your wonderful Dewan? Go and tell him that my "Serene Highness" requires him immediately.

(Exit Raghavachari).

Am I a fool or am I in the midst of fools?

(Takes up a photo on the table). This looks like... but whence these Royal robes of purple and velvet? Sure—this is my photograph! What is written here? "His Serene and Exalted Highness Prince Ramasundar Singh Bahadur, K.C.B.E., Ruler of Yercaud. Born 5th July 1902—Ascended the Gadi 17th August 1927." 5th July 1902—that happens to be my date of birth also—oh but there is nothing in that! Surely a good many folks must have been born on that day just as on any other! (Looking at his wrist watch) By jove—it is already late and I have five hours lecturing work to-day! Enough of this nonsense!

[As he is divesting himself of his Princely robes, enter Ganesan dressed as the Dewan, Narayanaswmi as the Commander-in-chief, Sundrarajan as the state physician and others dressed as courtiers. They advance in stately procession, the Dewan prostrates before the Prince, the commander-in-chief stands erect with drawn sword, the other courtiers range themselves on either side. Bugles sound. Two others dressed as ladies enter and perform Harathi. Mr. Sundaram stands gaping at this motley crowd).

Courtiers:—(Chorus). Long live his illustrious Highness! Long live our gracious Prince! (One by one they fall at his feet and perform obeisance. The two damsels relieve Raghavachari and Krishnamurthy who retire).

Mr. R. M:—I implore you, gentlemen, tell me what this means? Why all this paraphernalia—are they intended for me? You make me doubt my very existence! Who are you, what am I supposed to be and where am I?

State physician:—Your Highness, we crave of you not to excite yourself too much. If your Highness will condescend to take this seat, this humble servant who has served long and faithfully under your illustrious father, shall feel your Royal pulse and administer a proper dose of medicine!

Mr. R M:—Do you tell me I am ill? Indeed—I am sick of this flattery! What on earth is the matter with me and why all this solicitude on my behalf? Do you know who I am?

Dewan:—Has your Highness forgotten us again? Oh! Ye gentle Gods! Be kind unto our gracious sovereign and restore unto him his wandering wits!

(All kneel down in prayer).

Mr. R. M.:—What do you take me for—you pack of idiots? I have my wits about me. You seem to be a set of mad caps escaped from the lunatic asylum! I say, stop it, and tell me why you pray so devoutly for my welfare, as if I were the emperor of this land?

Commander-in-chief:—Thou art our King and Emperor, and at one word from your august lips, 20,000 soldiers at my command, are ready to lay down their very lives!

[The two damsels advance, fan him vigorously and gently wipe the perspiration from his forehead].

Mr. R. M.:—I beg your pardon, fair ladies, please don't trouble yourselves. Thank you. (Turning to the Dewan). I suppose you won't say next that either of these is your empress or both! I shouldn't at all be surprised at anything hereafter, now that I doubt my very identity. I am rather beginning to fancy, that I am not, after all, the poor ill-paid tutor of the Christian College, doing 29 hours of lecturing work and getting 49 rupees a month!

Dewan:—It pains us very much to hear your Highness give utterance to such base expressions. They are but two of your meanest waiting maids.

Mr. R. M.:—I say, look here, I am utterly disgusted with this pantomime. Will you release me immediately or shall I send for the police and hand you all over for trying to blackmail me? I give you five minutes to decide.

Commander-in-chief:—4,000 Soldiers of your Majesty's forces, armed to the teeth are on guard below and the Police dare not enter without my permission. The entire police force of the city is under my personal command!

Mr. R. M.:—What? Do you dare hold me here against my will? (Pause). I say, what is the use? You can't get a pie out of me, if that is your game. All my savings wouldn't amount to even five hundred rupees! You ought to have chosen a worthier victim.

Dewan:—Your lofty Highness—it is not for us to pick or choose. We cannot go against custom and usage. This kingdom is yours by right and we are your willing subjects.

Mr. R. M.:—Is there no hope for me then? Am I indeed lost for ever? Pray, gentlemen, how long do you propose to keep me here? Why do you weep?

Dewan:—(Weeping) I humbly beg pardon at your august hands for this unseemly outburst of sympathy for the Royal cause. Mighty Prince of noble lineage, well-nigh two years ago, your Highness, while driving in state through the georgeous city, with your fair consort by your side after your glorious wedding, two years ago, Your Majesty was struck down by a dire disease and, ever since your Majesty has suffered an appalling loss of memory. Noble Lord, think of thy birth, think of thy loyal and devoted sub-

jects, call home thy ancient thoughts from banishment and banish hence these lowly dreams!

Mr. R M. :—Stop; What have I got to do with your amiable Prince who lost his head? I am no Prince, amiable Prince who lost his head? I am no Prince,—(pause) am I or am I not?

Dewan :—Thou art and yet thou art not! Ever since that unfortunate date when thy Royal brains were effected, we have spared not your riches to minister to your sickness, but the cruel Gods have not yet been pleased to restore thee thy wandering wits. Your Gracious Highness hath persisted in believing that you were some wreeched pedagogue toiling for his very bread, and not all we could, to turn your Highness from such base thoughts, was of any avail. Thy mother the Queen and thy noble consort are suffering untold misery and, perceiving signs of returning memory a few days back, we have sent post-haste to the virtuous ladies, who should be here even now! These two years hath that lady, far more fair than any that basked at Indira's court, abstained from food and raiment and prayed to God to restore her loving lord to her laps. Your majesty, we beseech you, Your Highness, we entreat you, do but glance at your numerous subjects, each at his post ready at your beck and call. If music will please thine ears, the most renowned songsters are waiting to hold thine ears, if it will please thee to walk in thy bower, the very ground shall be strewn with the sweetest roses, or wilt thou ride, the most wonderful horses shall be saddled with harnesses studded with all the precious stones! Oh, Lord, cease to think that you are naught else but our loving Prince!

Mr. R. M. :—(deliberately) Stupendous hoax! Colossal fraud!! Do you mean to tell me that I am all what you have described just now so eloquently? And, and, that I have a beautiful Princess as my wife? I am no more a Prince than any of you, nor my wife a Princess!

Commander-in-Chief :—Sovereign Highness! What is to be our fate? Whom are we to serve and where shall we turn if our own gracious master shall disown us thus? We assure you on our oaths that we are your most devoted subjects and your gracious self our most wise and just ruler! Look at us closely, revered Sir and God grant that you remember us as your loyal henchmen!

Mr. R. M. :—Let me try. (Inspects them closely). Your faces are quite familiar. You look like some of my students in disguise; but what could be your motive in thus trying to impose on me?

State physician :—A thousand thanks to God that thy intelligence is returning surely though slowly! I had never despaired of it. How we rejoice to see your wits restored and ourselves recognised at your hands! This day there shall be great merriment in all the city, rejoicings in all our homes and special prayers shall be offered in all the temples of the land, that Your Majesty may live long and happily!

Servant :—Will it please your Mightiness to wash thy hands? (Holds up an ewer, basin and napkin).

Servant 2 :—Will it please Your Lordship to refresh thyself with this honeyed drink? (Presents a silver cup and saucer).

Servant 3 :—Will it please your Honour to taste these sweets? Uncovers a plate full of delicious preparations.

Servant 4 :—What robes shall your Majesty wear to-day?

Mr. R. M :—(Confounded). Am I a Prince after all, and, have I married a real Princess? Or, do I dream? It cannot be. I am not sleeping. I see, I hear, I speak, I smell sweet savours, and I feel soft things. The evidence is so overwhelming! I see absolutely no reason why so many gentlemen, they seem to be quite all right, should attach themselves to me in this fashion and swear eternal fealty and homage! Sure, the whole world can't be mad all at the same time! Yes, I must be a Prince if I was one and by God, now that I have realised it, gentlemen, I shall be a Prince and never forget it any longer! (Pause) But...but ..eh ... what is to to become of my appointment in the college and what am I to do here? I wonder what profession a Prince ought to take up?

Commander-in-chief:—Your Majesty, forget these evil dreams of College and tutor! This whole kingdom is thine and all its broad expanse of wealth untold and plenty. What need for our ruler to take to a meanly profession? Yours is the right to exercise sovereign sway over us and rule this state justly and wisely even as thy illustrious forefathers had done!

Mr. R. M:—So, is it true then; that I am a real Prince and no doubt of it?

Dewan :—By all that is sacred, by all that we regard as holy beneath the heavens and beyond, and the most damnatory evils befall us if we perjure, thou art our veritable Prince, tutor and sovereign!

Mr. R. M :—Tutor? Tutor? You still say that I am a tutor and that is exactly what I believe I was till lately!

Dewan :—Even so, it please your lordship—is it not the duty of the ruler to teach his subjects?

Mr. R. M :—Well, if you persist, I have no option but to be a ruling Prince. I can't disbelieve your combined testimony. Have no fear, my loving subjects.

The consciousness of my responsibility to the state and the subjects has at last been restored to me and let us render thanks unto Him for his mercy!

(All kneel down and pray).

Now, my loving folk, will you kindly leave me alone for a few minutes? Excuse me, I cannot yet reconcile myself that I am a real Prince in flesh and blood! You have so overwhelmed me with your diverse protestations that I am utterly dazed and confused! Let me think quietly for a few minutes, I pray you gentlemen, leave me awhile in peace. (All exit except the two waiting maids.)

What a colossal freak of fortune? Or is it a misfortune? I—to be—a Prince? Impossible! Absurd!! There must be solution somewhere! Let me think (Pause). Ha—but did they not talk of a Princess? She must be able to solve this riddle! Yes, therein lies my only ray of hope. I shall question her closely and from her answers I am sure, I shall unravel the mystery. Hey—you there—fetch the Dewan and the rest of the conspiratros.

(One of the maids goes out and returns with the whole company who salute and range themselves on either side).

Dewan :—Your Majesty, we are anxious to know what the cruel fates have still in store for us!

Mr. R. M:—That is really funny, but I am sure, it is my fate that is now hanging in the balance! Gentlemen, I have carefully considered your evidence but am not yet convinced that I am your Prince. I will give you however one more opportunity to prove your bonafides. Produce the Princess you spoke of and let me converse with her. If she will identify me as her husband, why then, what you say must be true and I must be the Prince after all, my tutorship in

the Christian College being but a fantasy of my deranged brain!

(Enter a servant).

Servant :—Your Majesty, the noble Princess has arrived with her retinue and craves immediate audience of your Majesty.

Dewan :—We await your gracious pleasure.

(Mr. Sundram nods assent. The Dewan retires and comes back with the Princess. She rushes towards the Prince, falls at his feet, sheds copious tears and embraces him.)

Princess :—Ah, my beloved Prince, art thou indeed restored unto me? My noble lord, days and nights have I watched at thy bedside, banishing food, refusing sleep and caring naught for my life. And the news of thy sudden recovery was like a healing balm unto my wounded heart. Won't you speak to me? Will you not play with me? Oh, how I long to be fondled again, petted and caressed as of old.

Mr. R. M :—I beg your pardon, sweet lady, but I am not yet convinced that I am your Prince. If you are really the Princess and my consort, you must be able to turn me round by referring to some incident in our wedded life, some little episode or something of that sort that will establish my identity beyond the shadow of a doubt.

Princess:—My gracious lord—thy memory is still not completely thine own and how can I recall to your mind those incidents or episodes that you are pleased to refer to? Are you testing me, my lord? Do you question my chastity? If so, ye Gods (kneeling) be witness, I swear upon my holy lovethat I am thy truly wedded consort, thou art my beloved husband, and the ruling Prince of this realm! Oh, what shall I do to convince thee? Is it for this that I came? But surely, this must—or I am lost for ever. (Whispers in his ears his marks of personal identification.)

Mr. R. M. :—(utterly dazed and clutching at a chair for support). Amazing! Surpassing!! Wonderful!!! I must be the Prince who lost his memory. I am the Prince and Oh, my faithful friends, I thank you all heartily for having saved me from something worse than a living death! And you, my dear Princess, for all thy misery these two long years that I was struck down, it shall be my greatest endeavour to make you doubly happy! I must lose no time. Hallo, Mr. Dewan issue an immediate proclamation under our Royal seal that to-morrow there shall be grand rejoicings in the whole kingdom. There shall be a splendid feast to-morrow in honour of our recovery. And be it made known that it is our Royal pleasure that prayers be offered in all the temples of our Kingdom for my long life and that of our noble Princess! This is indeed a happy day, and it is our intention to issue shortly a white paper which shall be your charter of liberties! Well, our beautiful consort is anxiously waiting for our company; we dismiss the class for the day! We assemble again to-morrow!!

All :—Long live the noble Prince of Yercaud!

Long live our gracious Queen!!

[One by one, the whole company retire in stately procession, kissing the hands of the Prince and Princess and bowing. Lastly, the Prince and Princess leave arm in arm].

[Enter again the Dewan and Commander-in-chief].

Ganes (Dewan):—Oh! My blessed lord! This is the greatest joke of our age. We have actually driven him mad!

Nara :—(Commander) That is all right my boy. But how are you going to persuade him again that he is not what we have made him believe?

Ganes :—That is none of our business. For all that I care, let him for the rest of his life believe that he is the Prince of Yercaud or the Emperor of China! We wanted sensation, and we have had it in plenty. Let us all pack off before he discovers the imposture!

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THE TWINS

By HENRY S. LEIGH

In form and feature, face and limbs,
I grew so like my brother,
That folks got taking me for him
And each for one another.
It puzzled all our kith and kin,
It reached an awful pitch;
For one of us was born a twin,
Yet not a soul knew "which."
When quite a little infant child
My trouble did begin,
For when I called for nourishment
'Twas given to the other twin;
They gave me Godfrey's cordial
When he kicked up a shine,
And when his nose was troublesome
They took to wiping mine.
One day, to make the matter worse,
Before our names were fixed,
As we were being washed by nurse
We got "completely mixed"
And thus you see by fate-decree,
Or rather nurse's whim,
My brother John got christened "me,"
And I got christened "him."
This fatal likeness even dogged
My footsteps when at school,
For I was always being flogged
'Cause he turned out a fool.
But once I had a sweet revenge,
For something made me ill;
The doctor came, and gave poor Jack
A black draught and a pill.
We both set up at last in trade:
My prospects were but grim;
The people bought my things; but paid
The money all to him.
And once when he had a drop,
And broke a policeman's nob,
They took me into custody
And fined me forty bob.
This fatal likeness turned the tide
Of my domestic life,
For somehow my intended bride
Became my brothers wife
Year after year, and still the same
Absurd mistakes went on;
And when I died the neighbours came
And buried brother John.

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THE TRAMP

By JACK SPENCER.

BOB Simmonds lost heavily on the turf and withal kept a sound head over it till it was too late to mend.

Simmonds was the chief accountant in 'Wilson & Wilson' dealers in diamonds. An omission in the accounts meant money and there were many such wilful ommissions. The auditors would drop in like the very hell the next day and a cool thousand pounds stood between him and his ruin.

Bob paid his bill with a flourish, lit a cigarette and left the 'Yellow Pig.' Under his slouch hat, the grim set face, the hawklike eyes, the compressed lips and the determined jaw was a perfect study. Evidently he was thinking.

"I must have a thousand pounds, this time to-morrow or they raise the wind," he half whispered to himself as he casually legged it on towards the 'Gardens Regale. He chose a far away seat in a a corner, looked at his watch and squeezed into the seat. It was half past six. "Just an hour more and I must be back home. My lady's order" he smiled.

NOT that Sheila Simmonds bossed him about the house. He never was present at her parties and she knew it, but Bob had his own ideas about attending Sheila's party if for once. He knew Sheila would wear her diamond bracelets and her pearl necklace. Also knew she would dance with him but how to get at them—the necklace and the bracelets—was a problem. How to get them? How?

> Causes of death, collected form the bulletin of vital statistics :—
>
> (1) Died suddenly; nothing serious.
>
> (2) Went to bed feeling well, but woke up dead.
>
> (3) The cause of death was, his mother died in infancy.
>
> (4) Patient should not have died, as he fully recovered from his sickness.
>
> (5) Don't know cause of death, as he died without the aid of a physician.
>
> (6) Kicked by horse shod on left kidney.
>
> (7) Died from blows on head with axe. Contributory cause was]another man's wife.
>
> (8) Deceased died from blood poisoning caused by broken pieces of glass when an automobile struck him between the lamp and the radiator.

It was then that Simmonds saw him. A burly figure huddled up in a corner. Next to him. Simmonds studied him patiently and heaved a sigh. He knew there was a way out of his difficulties!

Dressed in a tight fitting coat of uncertain color, mud bespattered trousers, soleless shoes and a battered hat the burly figure conveyed the impression of a tramp.

Simmonds edged towards him confidently, took out his silver cigarette case and lit a cigarette. "Like to smoke, ol'man."

The tramp turned and fixed a pair of watery eyes on Simmonds.

"No thanks, Guv'nor. I don't smoke. Hungry, if you please," said the tramp faintly.

" Hungry, eh ?"

"Yes, Guv'nor. A couple of days since I had a bite" he wailed.

' That's too bad, my man. Get up and follow me. You see my wife is giving a party this night and you shall have a square meal. Now do get up".

"You don't mean it, Guv'nor, do you" inquired the tramp suspiciously.

'Why not, ol'man. I mean it and now get up.'

'Excuse me, Guv'nor, I, aint coming. With you it is O. K. but perhaps madam may object. A tramp in a party. Queer, it is.'

'Of course, it is queer. I admit but never mind. Seat yourself in some cosy corner unseen and have a thick feed. Now hop it' encouraged Bob.

At the sight of the big house, the numerous cars parked out and power-

ful lights illuminating the whole street the tramp shuddered. Afraid to be seen amidst pomp and gaiety. And he was hungry. At the suggestion of Bob, the tramp slipped into the tradesmen's entrance and reached the hall by the stairway at the back of the house. Diamonds blazed and pearls shone. Silk and fur paraded. The whole hall seemed as if it was aflame. The tramp chose a table near the stairway and settled into his chair. Coffee and cakes were ordered. He was unobserved. 'Now make yourself at home and have your fill of man. I leave you for the present; said Bob arranging everything for the tramp. 'Thanks awfully, Guv'nor' smiled the tramp all gratitude unable to ferret out the nefarious scheme that lay behind his benefactor's generous impulse. Feeling sure he was quite unobserved, the tramp did justice to a couple of biscuits and a cup of hot coffee. Hunger appeased, he heaved a sigh. 'Life is worth living' he said to himself and turned towards the gay dancers on the smooth hall. "Life, that is life', he mused.

The lights suddenly went out and the whole hall was a sea of darkness. Young girls shrieked and the women cursed. "Light a match, somebody," said a voice. Feeble yellow flames flickered and died. 'Stay where you are and don't move' ordered a voice. My necklace, 'help help' shrieked a voice.

A minute and the lights were on. The hall was flooded with lights and there was pandemonium everywhere.

'My necklace—it is gone' wailed a woman and fainted. A small crowd gathered round her and removed her out into an ante room. Phone up the police' shouted a lady. And the tramp was observed.

The crowd rushed to him, eyed him from head to foot and sneered.

'He is the thief. Search him" chorused the crowd but the tramp was quite unmoved by the scene He stood up calmly kicked the chair back and smiled. 'Now, what's the charge, ladies and gents' he inquired gently to the astonishment of the angry crowd.

Bob Simmonds, shivering with rage forced himself through the crowd, rolling his shirt sleeves. 'Where is the necklace, you cunning rascal' he shouted. 'Be quick or I kick the life out of you'.

The tramp moved forward, removed his shabby coat and mud-bespattered trousers and smiled at the viate Simmons. 'I'm James Grant, a private detective.

Bob Simmonds paled all at once. If a bomb had exploded on his very palms he wouldn't have been more dazed. 'Well, Mr. Simmonds, the game is up' remarked the detective casually. 'How dare you' flared Simmonds unable to say anything else. He knew it was up. 'What do you mean, Sir?'

"I mean what I say, Mr. Simmonds I was appointed by your firm, Wilson & Wilson to watch your movements. To make good the misappropriated money you thought you could.........

"There please stop" pleaded Simmonds shaking nervously from head to foot.

"Now slip the necklace Mr. Simmonds. I arrest you for stealing your wife's necklace.

And the next minute Simmonds fished out a pearl necklace—his wife's

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PITY ME

BY BHRUNG

As the flash of the lightning suddenly appears and disappears the next moment spreading more gloom over everything and dazzling all eyes akin to blindness, did the face of my beloved appear to me just for an instant, transporting me into the land of bliss and peace, the next moment plunging me into an abyss of misery, leaving me to grope in the dark to falter and fall, hopeless and helpless, alone, to shout out for help in the wilderness of life, and to struggle onwards without the much sought for hand of the guide, the guide of my heart and life.

Oh goddess of my heart, why dost thou treat me so? What have I done to deserve this indifference at thy hands? Hast thou ever found me unworthy of thy regard, thy love? Or say, is it but thy manner of expressing the little regard that you have for me? Ere a moment ago did I think, though standing on the brink of a precipice full of dangers innumerous, fully confident of thy supporting hands, thy guiding hands, that the dangers were of little consequence and would harm me in no way under thy protection and I beamed with joy, but the next moment I saw the helping hand withdrawn, leaving me all alone to shout thy name, till I would turn myself hoarse and could shout no longer.

Oh beloved, pity, have pity on me. Too deep have I drunk of the divine nectar and now that I have drunk of it, everything else has turned tasteless and unworthy of touching with the same lips, that have partaken of such divine fluid.

THAT WAS THAT

By J. H. ACOTT.

IT all began the other day—the blisters on my feet, my black eye and the lump on the base of my spine, I mean,—when my wife Emilia read an advertisement in the Delhi Herald. If it had been an advertisement to the effect that "Getting your face lifted is the easiest thing in the world if you see LIFTO!" I wouldn't have minded. Because my face doesn't require lifting-or rather, several medical men have told me that it would be a waste of time lifting it. They're wise guys, some of these medicos, and they can sure see a handsome face when it looms up before them.

No, much to my horror, the advertisement was something about "Eating more fruit makes you happy and gay. A mango a day keeps the doctor away" and a few more years of that sort of tripe. From which last word of vivid description you will most probably have guessed that I don't like mangoes- or fruit for that matter.

"Henry," said Emilia at the tiffin table one Sunday as she put the news-paper down, "you should eat more fruit."

"I prefer oysters," I said, knowing that some mad idea had struck her.

"Fruit," she went on calmly, "is so full of phosphorus and carbon di-oxide that it keeps all the nitric acid out of your system."

Now, I am no chemistry expert, but there seemed to be something wrong with Emilia's statement.

"YOU mean phosphate and carborundum and picric, my dear—or don't you?" I asked mildly.

"No. I don't. I meant just what

I said. And don't you go trying to pick holes in me."

"God forbid!" I said, trying to be funny and hoping that she would enjoy the joke. "I haven't got a beak anyway, and ......"

But Emilia, who is, to my mind, a most unreasonable woman, twitched her nose up and down two or three times—a most disgusting and annoying habit she has—and went on with her breakfast, or rather, tiffin. I really can't think these days. I wonder if Emilia has anything to do with it?

When the meal was over, Emilia assumed her amazonian attitude of power that always finishes me off. Not that I'm afraid of her, of course. I'd like to see Emilia try anything on me! Within reason, of course.

"Now," she said. "We've got to go out and buy some fruit. The side board looks bare. And besides, fruit is so full of....."

"Worms, sometimes," I put in, but was immediately trodden upon, figuratively, by a baleful glare.

"To-day's Sunday and it's a nice cool afternoon. And you sleep too much on Sunday afternoons," continued Emilia.

"But it looks like rain," I bleated. "You can never trust this monsoon weather."

"You can't see outside from here," argued Emilia unreasonably. "This room's got no windows. And, anyway—come on. Get a move on and make it snappy!"

Well, that, in the words of the sage, was that. With great unwillingness, I torched myself up for appearance in the street.

The fruit market in Delhi always presents a nauseating sight to me. A long row of stalls, about a mile long, or to be slightly more accurate, about a quarter of a mile long, groans with all sorts and conditions of horrible fruit, from water melons to pea-nuts. The fruiterers are all brothers—or so it appears—and they have a wonderful system of business.

Emilia dismissed our tonga, her well known and humiliating Scotch instinct forbidding the use of one, while she haggled away her time.

"But what about if you can't get one, when we want to go back?" I asked. "It's four miles all the way and ......"

"I think," said Emilia, "that we'll start at this first shop here in the row. And then we can work upwards till we come to a cheap stall."

I shrugged and Emilia began her mango hunt.

"How much a dozen are those mangoes?" she asked the first fruiterer as she pointed to some mangoes that were as big as soap suds.

"One rupee," said the nonchalant fruiterer as he picked his teeth with at apple stalk.

'One rupee!". Emilia's shriek drew quite a lot of attention to us.

"One rupee." The fruiterer wasn't even looking at us. Most probably he thought he had seen better things than us crawling out of cheese. And he didn't seem to give a damn for Emilia. I wished heartily and admiringly that I could adopt him for a bodyguard.

"Robbery!" shrieked Emilia, forgetting that she was now in a respectable fruit market and not in her native Billingsgate.

The man went on picking his teeth and shrugged his shoulders indifferently.

"Stout fella!" I muttered. "Oh what a lion heart!" It's like whisky and soda on a hot day when I see anyone get the better of Emilia.

Emilia snorted at the man without effect, and we stalked off to the next shop in the row.

"Those mangoes?" asked Emilia, pointing again.

"Two rupees a dozen," calmly stated the somnolent fruiterer. Emilia reeled and almost slipped on a stray bit of orange peel.

"But they're smaller than the ones I've just been asked, one rupee a dozen for!" she croaked.

"No can help!" was the indifferent reply.

And so we continued up that long, line of shops, nearly a mile of them—sorry, a quarter of a mile. And by the time we'd tried all forty of them and had come to a dead lock at the last, Emilia was almost totally insane and was frantically bargaining to pay five rupees a dozen for mangoes, that were the other half of the soap suds, we saw in the first shop.

But the fruiterer wanted six rupees a dozen, and he wouldn't budge, even though he seemed fascinated by the wart on the end of Emilia's nose.

"There you are," I said accusingly as we stood irresolute and a fine drizzle of rain began. 'Didn't I tell you? And why the devil couldn't you have paid the rupee to the first man and saved all this trouble?"

"If you were a man," snorted Emilia, "instead of an apology for a super-fine hairpin, you'd tell this man here where to get off! He keeps looking at me!"

I looked at the burly fruit seller, and I must have felt rather safe with Emilia by my side, for I said fiercely,

"Look here my man, do you know you're not playing the game? And that, because of that, you will always have bad luck?"

"Lame mad duck?" was the angry reply. "Who's a lame mad duck?" He evidently couldn't quite understand English, and his ignorance prompted him to heave a banana at me. I jumped to dodge it, but it hit me in the left eye, and when my feet touched Mother Earth again, well, they hit that banana and the base of my spine hit the pavement. That in the words of a famous philosopher, was that.

"We'd better get out of here before there's a riot," I said and we hurried off back along down that long line of fruit shops.

"But I'm going to get my mangoes," said Emilia stubbornly. "And I'll get them too! Let's go back to the first shop, A rupee's not bad after all!"

Back we arrived at the first man's shop.

"Look here," said Emilia, and the fruit seller looked indifferently down at his foot. Ignoring the insult, Emilia went on. "Look here. I'm quite willing to pay you a rupee a dozen for those mangoes. Not that they're cheaper of course, but they look nicer than all the others I've seen."

"Madam," said the fruiterer, "since you were here—oh!—so long ago, the price of those mangoes has gone up due to trade depression. They are now worth nothing less than seven rupees a dozen."

That was Emilia's *coupe-de-grace*.

"I'll—I'll eat your beastly oysters in future," she said to me, and we left the market.

"Call a tonga, Henry," she went on. But there wasn't a tonga in sight.

"A tonga, sir?" said a kindly police constable when I put the question to him. "Sorry, sir, they've all gone on strike!"

Emilia is too mean to take a taxi.

And that, as the wise guy said, was that!

Pinching the Gardener

By RAHAMAT.

VISALA, the prettiest girl of the Fourth University class, well-comed the friend of her child hood days with a warmth, only a girl of her type could assume at will.

" Now that you are here," she exclaimed joyously, " I am, so to speak, absolutely on velvet. Henceforth our hostel-life would be just one long song of jollity and riotous fun, and our motto would be: Make whoopee before you become goody-goods."

The new-comer to the hostel was also a pretty girl, but in her beautiful serene eyes there was not that shining, strange mischievous light, that was so transparently noticeable in her companion's. Those eyes were unsophisticated and simple, as it were, suggesting plainly to any one who had the privilege of looking into them that their owner had not yet had any experience of life in a girls' hostel.

" To our heart's content and to somebody's discomfiture, of course, eh?" she asked her friend. She seemed to know Visala inside out.

" May be " assented Visala "we can't help, if our innocent fun affects some one adversely."

" Still the same old Visa, dear, what !"

" And still the same little sweet Saras, darling, I hope !" Visala remarked, prodding her friend in the ribs, meaningly.

THOUGH Sarasa slightly winced at the proceding which pained her a little she did not protest. For, between one girl friend and another, prodding in the ribs is never considered a violence of decorum.

"I am sorry," Visala apologised. "As I was saying," she continued. "for three long years, the crying need in our hostel has been, a suitable companion for Visala, the well-behaved."

"You mean a helpful and intelligent accomplice, didn't you?"

"Put it in your own silly way, but please don't interrupt. For three years... ..."

"Chorus!"

Visala ignored it.

"For three years," she said, "I had to arrange my little pleasureres all by myself—not that there were much. I should say they were almost 'nil' But now, the clouds have drifted away, and out of a clear blue sky there has appeared, a shiny little star. And I need not pine any more for a companion.—"

"Why?"

"Why?" Visala exclaimed. "Why? Don't be so silly. I mean, because you are here!"

"But," pointed out Sarasa. "I am *not* here, as you mistakenly suppose!"

"What!" asked Visala surprised. "How do you mean—not here? Havn't you come down to their hostel or are not you going to?"

Sarasa smiled sadly. "I certainly love to come here, but, you see, I can only be a day-scholar. My father has retired, and is now living in the City, and naturally..."

"No naturally or any of that nonsense," Visala said chagrined. "Look at this hostel with its beautiful and cosy rooms facing the sea! Does it not tempt you to give the dad the slip and... ..."

"I am a dutiful child. No!"

"And consider its inmates. Your Visala, for instance. Is not her presence alone in the Hostel, enough to induce you to join its ranks?"

"No!"

"And again look at all these verdant greens, the shady gardens and ideal bowers for a *tete-a-tete* Don't they mean anything to you..."

"No!"

All the same, Sarasa looked round about her with a wistful eye.

"A pretty nice garden you have here," she remarked presently. "Quite well cared for!"

"That is because we have got such a good gardener!"

"That reminds me, Visa," said Sarasa. "My father has recently purchased a bungalow, full of weeds and thorny bushes in the compound. And he is in search of a reliable hard-working gardener."

"Then, the man your father wants' Visala suggested readily," is Eswarayya"

"Who?"

Visala waved her hand in a circle indicating the whole garden.

"The man who is responsible for the beautiful appearance of this compound," she said. "He is an educated fellow-has read up to the sixth form"

She thought for a moment.

"I have an idea," she exclaimed presently. Why not Eswarayya himself?"

"Do you mean to suggest," Sarasa asked wondering that we can get hold of him if we were to offer a better salary than what he is getting now?"

"Some such idea is at the back of my mind," Visala admitted, "but there is a hitch in it. Saras. You see he has entered into an honourable contract with the Hostel warden, by which he will have to forfeit his current month's salary and his security deposits, if he should stop away of his own accord. Quite a business-like clause imposed upon that poor fellow, against the risk of the gardens being left uncared-for any moment..."

"Who is that warden? she sounds great?"

"Great? She is the toughest of her species. One Miss Sadasivan—our professor of philosophy, to to boot!"

The name seemed familiar.

"Sadasivan?" Sarasa mused. "Sadasivan, eh? I remember to have heard that somewhere... ...where was it......Ah, Is her other name Danakotiammal by any chance?"

"I don't know," said Visala." But quite probable. She is that sort, any, way!'

"Only a month back,' Sarasa went on, "my dad was telling me about one Miss. Sadasivan who had been his class-mate. They used to call her, Danak."

Visala was very much interested. 'Danak!' She exclaimed laughing 'what a funny contraction!'

'Not a pet name, dear,' explained Sarasa. 'It had been given her just because, every one disliked her. Danak! To denote sarcasm, displeasure and what not!

"Of course, I understand.'

'Well, this Danak, was in love with one Varma my dad's best friend and it was generally known that he..."

'What! Did he love her in return?"

'No, no. He did not care a hoot for her. She went away with her nose high up in the air and joined the I. E. S. to live and forget. My father told me all these, because you see, Mr. Varma now happens to be our neighbour.'

Visala worked herself up to a great pitch of enthusiasm learning this bit of the 'past' of her much-disliked warden.

"Post me with full details,' she cried, "and meanwhile I won't forget what your father wants is, an ideal gardener like Eswarayya!'

Miss D. Sadasivan, the imperious warden of the Cosmopolitan Leaders, Hostel raised her lofty eye-brows.

'A visitor to see *me*?' she queried incredulously.

'Yes, Madam,' bowed the attendant.

'Then send him here!'

The maid hesitated before she spoke again.

'But, Madam, he expressly wishes that Madam should see him in the visitors' Hall. He refuses to come up to Madam's room here!'

'What?'

'I suggested it myself, Madam but the gentleman said that Madam would waive all her objections, on hearing his name.

'Eh! what name?'

'R. V. Sarma, Madam. And he also said that if Madam does not remember the owner of that name, I am to say as a sort of aid to revive Madam's memory, the word-sip-lip.

'Sip-lip! Is the fellow mad?,

'I don't know, Madam. But he looks a nice gentleman. He also asked me to mention, in case that word was of no use, the saying...'—she let out another giggle..."The saying Madam that: A tin at the end of a donkey's tail is worth two in......"

Miss Sadasivan raged. That was the limit.

'I will come there, and teach a lesson to that raving lunatic!' she exploded.

The greatest vice of modern girls in Miss Sadasivan's opinion, was their habit of allowing, nay encouraging youthful members of the other sex to call on them at the Hostel. And whenever she discovered that a girl's visitor behaved in a manner more

intimate than that of a mere brother or cousin, she expressed herself in very s strong words. She would on such occasions spare no pains to exploit her remarkable vocabulary to the full, in wording her displeasure at the delinquent.

So, when she found herself in a situation that she had, for the past ten years, been warning all the girls against, she felt extremely embarrassed.

True, she did not betray herself in front of the servant maid nor let her suspect what tender emotions that name, Varma aroused. Arouse—it nevertheless did, all these feelings that were lying dormant for the past twenty-five years !

But, why after all these years and why at all should he be anxious to see her, of all persons ?

And why that word : sip-lip ? And that about a Donkey's Tail ? what did they mean ? Was it his intention to mingle humour with pathos ? Varma, that boy !

Her steps were light and a murmured song was upon her lips, as she came down. She entered the Hall buoyantly.

But the next moment she stopped dead. For she found there, seated in a chair, not an old man of about her age as Varma ought to be by that time, but strong well-built young man of thirty-five or so !

The man rose as she approached.

'Good-evening, Madam,' he said affably. 'Madam, I notice, is slightly surprised I will explain in a moment Mr. Varma being unable to come himself, sent me instead. I am his secretary. Mr. Varma's idea was that I should come here first and break the ice as it were.'

'To break what?' asked the woman.

'To break the ice, the thing, madam we get out of water by freezing it. Only metaphorically, Madam, I mean.

She glared at him.

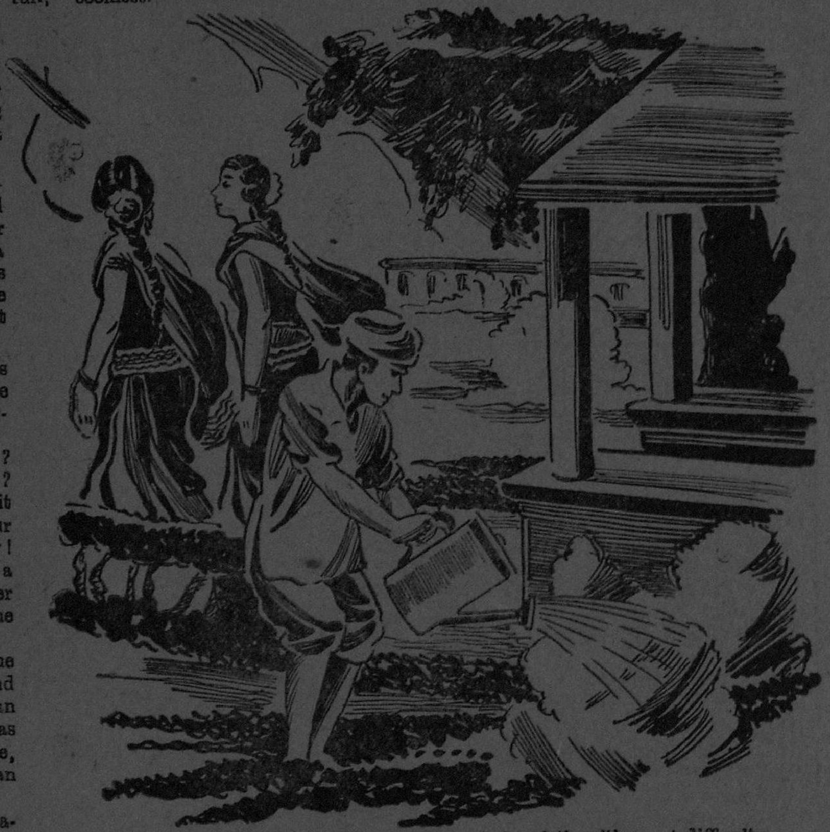
'I know what an ice is,' she barked "what do you mean ?"

He looked at her stony eyes.

'But there are ice and eyes,' he remarked with a double meaning. 'As I was saying, Madam, my employer was not sure that you would still remember the olden days, and he wanted to know just where exactly he may stand in Madam's,.....'

'What are you talking about ?' she demanded fiercely. 'Get out !'

The man calmly thrust his hands into his trouser-pockets and met Madam's withering gaze with absolute coolness.



'Sip-lip !' he said with a confident smile, 'Or the Donkey's tail and the tin !' he added, as an after-thought.

But the words, instead of putting the Madam in an available mood, seemed to make her more furious than ever.

'What is all this about,' she demanded dancing in rage. 'Who and where is your employer. and why this kind of a tom-foolery ?'

He would have cleared the mystery, had not Fate, sent at that very moment some half a dozen girls coming along the verandah. Mr. *Varma's* secretary was about to speak, but he changed his mind as he saw the girls about to enter the Hall, laughing, joking and singing.

'Madam,' he observed solemnly, 'we are about to be disturbed.' In a flash Miss Sadasivan reached the door and blocking the girls' path, so that they might not enter the Hall and see her visitor, spoke to them severely.

"Make less noise,' she ordered imperiously in a rasping tone, 'And go back to your rooms straight away.'

The girls-Visala, Phyllis, Ragini, Sulochana and the others, controlled their mirth with great difficulty.

"Nothing, Madam," Ragini tried to explain, "Only. the gardener......"

"Shh ! cautioned Visala.

"What !" asked Miss Sadasivan, suspecting something in the furtive manner of the girls, "Well, what about the gardener ? Tell me !"

"Nothing Madam," emphasised Visala.

But Phyllis blurted out "we saw him wearing trousers, top-hat and a pair of whiskers..."

"What for, eh ?" asked the warden.

"Don't know, Madam. He looked quite funny !"

"Absolutely clownish !" Rajini added.

"And we saw him enter this Hall," said Visala seeing that the situation has got out of her control, "and we followed him up here."

"*This* Hall ?"

'Yes, Madam, just a moment ago."

Miss Sadasivan subjected the girls, to a searching look.

"May be," she said. "But is it a maker," she asked, "over which you young girls should lose all your propriety and modesty?" She rasped out a quick order. Go to your rooms at once, " she barked. "Each one of you!"

"So that is the same, is it?" she mused returning to her visitor, "You simpering tool, you scallywag of a rogue from Hill! Before he could recover she gave him a full slap on his cheeks and wrenched off his moustache.

"You, dithering gatherer of weeds" she exclaimed, "you are sacked."

Rushing up to a stranger just as his train was about to leave the station, a traveller asked: "Are you going on this train?" "I am!" was the reply. "Well, my friend," said the traveller, "You might do me a favour. I have two big trunks and they always make me pay extra for one of them. Would you mind taking one, it will cost you nothing?" "But I haven't a ticket!" said the stranger. "I thought you said you were going by this train?" exclaimed the answer. "I am!" was the answer. "I am a travelling ticket Examiner!"

"Thank you *very* much, Madam," said Eswarayya, as cool as a cucumber, "I wanted it so-for a long time indeed!"

"Get out!" the infuriated woman barked." Before......"

"The discharge notice," remarked Eswarayya in the best of spirits, "having emanated from Madam's lips, when can I come as per contract to collect the month's salary and my security deposit?"

"Get out!" repeated Miss Sadasivan more vehemently.

The ex-gardener walked steadily towards the door.

"All right, Miss Danak." he said vanishing through it, "good-bye, for the present!"

One evening, a few weeks after, Visala was standing with her friend, Sarasa on the lawn of the latter's bungalow. Round about them within the compound, were rows and rows of flower plants, some in full bloom, and others just budding, and a neatly but simply dressed young fellow at a distance in the act of nursing and watering the plants."

'He is really a good gardener, Vis. said Sarasa. Dad has given him two assistans as Eswar is also acting as our chauffeur. Dad is all praise about him.'

Visala laughed proudly. He is a genious my dear. Do you know what? It was all his idea-I mean, those little bits about sip-lip and Donkey's tail and all that nonsense!"

"Really?"

"He says that idea came to him after he studied the psychology of Miss Danak. Her stern-willed character, he says, demanded something which would irritate her, pique and intrigue her beyond all measure, if she should be led to give him the sack"

"And it worked!"

"Worked? I went across with a bang, my dear! And how.

And they laughed.

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32, MOUNT ROAD : : MADRAS.

A Barrister who was sometimes forgetful, having been engaged to plead the cause of an offender, began: "I know the prisoner at the bar and he bears the character of being a most consummate and impudent scoundrel."

Here somebody whispered to him that the prisoner was his client, whereupon he continued: "But what great and good man ever lived who was not calumniated by many of his contemporaries?"

* * *

A Jew had married a wealthy widow and a few weeks after the ceremony a friend met him

"Congratulations on your wedding," he said. "I hear it was worth about eighty thousand pounds to you."

"People will exaggerate so," said the Jew, testily. "Why, I had to pay three guineas for the ring."

* * *

"Did he furnish his whole house with secondhand stuff?"

"Yes—he even married a widow."

* * *

"You see, I've arranged to be married when the house is finished"

"All right, sir," replied the foreman; "we ll hang the job out as long as we can."

* * *

Aunt: "Hallo, Johnny! We don't see as much of you as we used to.'

Jhonny: "Well, I wear long trousers now."

* * *

"As soon as the cold weather comes I have to stop playing billiards."

"How's that?"

"Every time the three balls get together they remind me of my overcoat."

* * *

"Darling, I've lost all my money. Haven't a penny in the world."

"That won't make any difference to our love, dear. I'll love you just as much—even if I never see you again!"

* * *

The Colonel was lecturing his men.

"If a civilian endeavours to pick a quarrel with a soldier in a public-house," he said, "the soldier should drink up his beer and leave the place at once."

"Now, Private Smith," he said, two minutes later, "if a civilian tried to quarrel with you in a public-house what should you do?"

"I ought to drink up 'is beer, sir, and go quietly away."

* * *

Artist: "Darling, I'd like to do you in oils"

She: "Oh! Do you take me for a sardine?"

* * *

A Long Wait.

A meeting had just concluded at a certain race-course, and the secretary had gone home to take a well-earned rest. Just as he was settling down the telephone bell rang.

"Hallo!" said a somewhat uncertain voice "Is that the shecretary of the racecourshe?"

The secretary answered in the affirmative.

Can you tell me when the courshe will be opened again?" asked the voice.

"Last week in November," replied the secretary sharply.

"Not before that?" asked the agitated inquirer.

"No!" barked the secretary.

"Crikey!" gasped the voice "That's going to be dashed awkward. I'm locked in the bar!"

* * *

"I'm sorry, but I can do nothing for you as your complaint is hereditary. My fee is seven-and-sixpence."

"Good! Send the bill to my ancestors."

* * *

Tact.

The shoe dealer was engaging an assistant. "Suppose," he said, "a lady customer were to remark while you were trying to fit her, 'Don't you think one of my feet is bigger than the other?' what would you say?"

"I should say, 'On the contrary, madam, one is smaller than the other.'"

"The job is yours."

* * *

The Terror.

"What model is your car?"

"It's not a model, it's a horrible example."

* * *

Change.

"Do you have much variety at your boarding house?"

"Well, we have three different names for the meals."

* * *

Sinning on the Sabbath.

"The new neighbours want to cut the grass," announced Bridget, "and they want to know if you will lend them your lawn-mower."

"Lend them the lawn-mower to cut the grass on the Sabbath!" exclaimed the shocked mistress. "Certainly not, Bridget. Tell them that we haven't one."

* * *

Visitor: "What is the professor's research?"

His Wife: "It consists principally of hunting for his spectacles."

* * *

"Young Dick says his heart is lacerated."

"Who's the lass?"

* * *

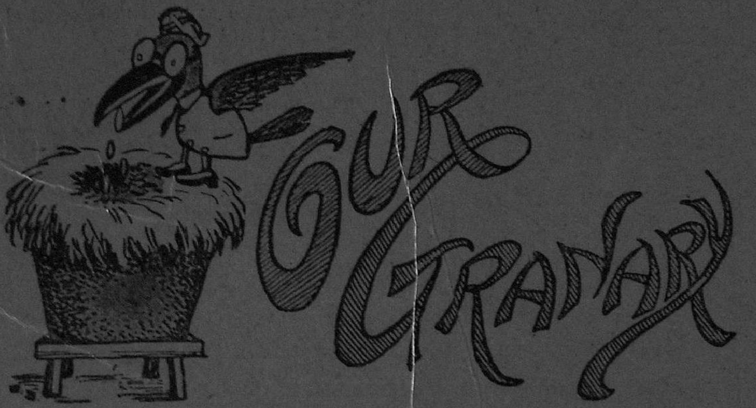
"Your diet should include plenty of iron."

"But, doctor, I haven't a tooth in my head."

* * *

"I had a great stroke of luck this morning. I found a ten-shilling note in an old waistcoat."

"Why, how could that happen? I thought you were married."



It's a Queer World.

Alex Anderson, a twenty-four-year-old artist's model, claims to have broken a worlds' strong man record. He has pulled three motor-cars roped together, and six passengers, over a distance of 32 in.—with his teeth. The total weight of cars and passengers was 3 tons 4 cwt. 4¾ lb.

* * *

A bridegroom has been ceremonially "married" to a mango tree at Dumka (Bihar). A solemn procession circled round the tree, daubed it with spots of vermilion paint and garlanded the "husband" with its leaves. This was the preliminary to his being married to his real bride-elect.

That's Curious!

A man of 126 at Guilan, a Caspian district of Iran, has a son over 100 years old, a daughter of ninety-five, 300 grand-children, and has been married three times.

* * *

A new material that can be used in place of cotton wool for surgical dressings has been discovered by a Russian doctor. Algimine as the material has been named is made from a fibrous water-weed which grows in large quantities in certain Siberian lakes.

* * *

A shawl made entirely of sea-shells is on exhibition in Sydney. It is valued at £1 200. More than 25000 shells, every one pierced and crocheted in place went to the making of the shawl.

* * *

According to the report of a geography professor, neither London nor New York can claim to be the largest town—in the matter of size. This is claimed by Debreesen in Hungary, for the area of that town occupies over six hundred square miles.

* * *

In twenty-four French villages in the Jura Mountains along the Swiss border the inhabitants pay no taxes, but actually receive dividends from the municipalities. This is due to the efficiency with which the municipally-owned forests are run.

* * *

A heavily-built Frenchman, Floyd Vrette—he weighs over 22 stone—beat thirty competitors in the first heat of the Milwaukee, U. S. A., beer-drinking contest. He drank two quarts in 37 seconds.

One of his rivals was Mrs. Ellen Fucke, fifty-year-old grandmother. She weighed 25 stone, but her capacity was smaller. She couldn't finish her half-gallon.

* * *

The rarest metal on earth is actinium, which is now worth £ 200,000 an ounce. This metal has a greater penetrating power than radium and will last about 20 times longer.

* * *

The earliest business transactions were conducted by barter. Some of the very latest ones are being effected in just the same way.

Surgical instruments and equipment are at present required for a new hospital in Mexico. They are being obtained from Germany, and their money value is £ 125,000. The hospital authorities, however, are not paying in cash but with rice—13,000 tons of it.

Have you ever heard of a parent settling for his child's school fees in anything but money? A farmer, living in Concord, New Hampshire, was recently allowed by the State authorities to send the local school a crop of potatoes in payment for his daughter's education.

Many poor artists in Paris are living at the moment by barter. One has obtained a suit of clothes from a tailor in return for a picture he has painted; another is known to have "swapped" a work of art with a baker for a year's bread supply—one loaf per day; while a third has, by the same means, secured for himself a year's free shaves and haircuts from a barber.

In this last instance the barber may have struck a bargain—for most Paris artists incline to long hair and beards!

* * *

Man's blood contains seventy-five per cent water while woman has eighty per cent.

* * *

An ostrich's egg may weigh over three and a half pounds and be equal to twenty-five hens' eggs.

* * *

If you are a man of average weight you can consume forty-three cups of tea a day without any risk of consequences according to an American scientist

* * *

From a gallon of tar, worth 3½ d, a gallon of petrol worth a shilling can be obtained by a new process now being tested in the Government laboratories.

* * *

The dog comes fifth.

Which do you imagine to be the most intelligent of the lower animals?

* * *

The dog? Wrong. The horse? Still more wrong. That is, according to the findings reached in some American psychological laboratories where animals of all kinds have been put through intelligence tests.

Here is the result they give:

1. Chimpanzee.
2. Orang-utan.
3. Elephant.

Your dog only comes in fifth; your horse is seventh. The domestic cat is tenth—in other words, "tailed off."

* * *

Although twenty years of age Douglas Baker, of Philadelphia, has never eaten any solid foods. He exists entirely on liquids—milk, tea, coffee, orange-juice, and corn starch.

* * *

A HISTORICAL ROMANCE

By INCOGNITO.

My friend Rajan is a clever writer. He has written a great number of things, letters to his father-in-law, love letters to his wife, open letters to the Press and so on, besides a few verses, one or two short-stories and humorous sketches, which are awaiting publication. But trouble arose, when he began to write dramas. He has a fertile imagination, and a chaotic brain: the result was the evolution of wild and weird plots, unintelligible to any one: least of all to himself. I certainly do not object to his writing plays: that seems to the fashion nowadays. Every Tom, Dick and Harry who has read a few dramas of Shakespeare and seen one or two amateur performances, fancies himself to be a veritable incarnation of the immortal Bard of Avon!

When Rajan told me the other day that he had almost finished the last scene and that he would like to have my criticisms, I trembled. I felt instinctively that our friendship was doomed, because I I knew what he expected. It may be a rotten affair, hopelessly bad, execrable, but still polite fiction and the obligations of friendship required that I should go into ecstacies over its alleged excellence and say something like this: Oh! Yes. it is really very good for a maiden attempt. I am sure it will be a marvellous success!' You cannot tell him what you really think of it, you cannot say honestly that it is not worth the paper on which it is written: if you do that, your friendship ceases from that moment. I did not want to lose Rajan's friendship— he had obliged me with tenners and fivers on innumerable

occasions—and so I put him off with a lame excuse. "I am really sorry" I pleaded, "I am very busy just now. Why not you meet me this evening at the club? We shall go through the manuscript carefully." Of course he was disappointed, he must have felt that I was unnecessarily damping his literary ardour, but again you see, convention required that he should accept my apology. And accept—he reluctnntly did, with an ill-concealed grace.

WE are members of the same club: in fact my friend holds an executive portfolio in the Histrionic section; I think it is 'Prompter-in-chief' or some such important office. I am not ashamed to confess that I know very little of Drama or the Histrionic Art, and care much less. Once however, I was literally compelled to go on the stage, as a substitute for some actor who fell ill at the last moment, and I remember I made a horrible mess of the whole affair. I forgot my lines, blinked like an idiot and said something I ought not to have said. When my scene was over, instead of disappearing into the inner regions along the side-wings. I quietly jumped down from the stage and took my seat in the front row, regardless of the paint and powder that adorned my face. There was a tremendous outburst of laughter from the audience: I thought they were paying me a sincere compliment; I stood up proudly and acknowledged their cheers! That was the last time I ever had anything to do with the theatrical activities of our club. Of one thing however, I am convinced, and that is our amateur performances are not intended for purposes of enjoyment—from the point of view of the audience. They are organised for charity. Therefore let us bear with them, suffer under them, lie about them and be charitable also!

But my friend Rajan takes a good deal of interest in the subject: he believes he is a born actor, though most of his friends including my humble self, do not agree. His doctor friends (Rajan is himself a doctor) say that he is a better actor, and his actor friends are unanimously of the opinion that he is better as a doctor. Whatever the truth of it may be—I am not competent to say being myself neither a doctor nor an actor—my friend is an enthusiastic worker in the sacred cause of Theatrical Uplift. He is a member of half a dozen clubs whose sole object is the Elevation of the South Indian Stage. In fact, he is a hopeless victim to the lure of the foot-lights. He would have some engagement or other everyday in all the clubs, with the result that by the time he came to our club, it would be about closing time. As a rule he would arrive just when all the others were leaving.

I had fixed up an appointment for that particular evening and so I had to wait patiently for his arrival. I read all the newspapers, played a couple of games of Billiards and still there was no sign of his coming. I went into the Library, took up some back-numbers of Punch and Tit-bits, and fell asleep turning over their pages.

I must have slept for more than an hour, when I opened my eyes it was a quarter to nine and my friend was standing before me. "I say, I am really sorry," he apologised, "to have kept you waiting so long. I couldn't come earlier. I had to attend an important committee meeting in the officers' club." He took his seat, and pulled out a big roll of manuscripts from his pocket.

There was no means of escape, I looked at the clock and ventured a feeble protest. "Isn't it very late, Rajan? How long would it take?"

"Oh! not more than an hour. I have asked the watchman not to close the doors. I knew you would feel hungry, and I have ordered refreshments."

That was at least some consolation.

"How many scenes have you written?" I asked over the coffee.

"You see, it is a complicated plot, a Historical Romance. As it is, there are forty-seven scenes."

"Forty seven!" I exclaimed in genuine admiration, "that means, the play will run for a week at a stretch, I suppose in instalments."

"Don't be silly. I intend dividing it into two parts—I mean-eh-each part will be self contained, but whenever the drama is taken up it must be staged on two consecutive days, one part after the other.'

"I see, that is a good idea. Killing two birds at one time."

"I can't help it—forty-seven scenes is the irreducible minimum, otherwise I cannot do justice to the story: the continuity would be lost. Shall we begin?"

"Wait a minute, let me settle down," which process I accomplished by reclining comfortably in an easy-chair. "Now begin Part I," and I resigned myself to the inevitable.

"I will give you a short synopsis of the story," he commenced, in right earnest.

I looked out. It was raining hard, but the room was bright and cosy. "Go on," I nodded, and he went on as follows.

"There are thirty five characters, not counting the extras, I mean the soldiers, courtiers dancing girls and the other non-descripts. These charaters include one man who has lost his character, he is the villain and, three servant maids who never had any, they are his accomplices. Then, there is the Hero of course, he isn't an ideal Hero, he does nothing Heroic, but I have depicted him in such a clever manner that the audience will think he is the Real Hero! And because he is the Hero, he undergoes a number of difficulties; he is arrested at the end of every act and gets seven years hard labour for each offence. In the end however, it is proved that the charges are all false and the Hero regains his liberty." He paused for breath.

"The first part" he continued "contains six Acts."

"That means to say" I suggested innocently "practically a life sentence for your Hero!"

That is exactly what is called Dramatic Irony," and he thumped on the table with apparent pride, on his tremendous achievement.

I looked quite small—and felt sleepy.

"The villain commits eight murders, two of them he commits before the play begins, five between the Acts and the last one, after the play ends. I have arranged it that way so as to save blood shed on the stage and keep it clean. You see the point?"

Honestly, I did not.

"The first Act begins with the Hero chasing the villain, and the curtain drops on the Hero, hand-cuffed and marched off to prison, a beautiful tableau. You see, the beginning and the ending must always be very effective, nothing like half a dozen tableaux in every scene—that is the Parsee style."

I do not remember anything else. But my friend was so absorbed in

(Continued on page 28).

THE WAY OUT

By RAJENDRAN

WE were startled out of our languish repose of the summer after-noon by a noisy clatter up the stairs. The doors of our Bachelor Club banged apart and Archy rushed into our midst. 'Hullo lad : How do you ?' we all howled in chorus. He had long been absent and we were glad to see him. Poor chap got married recently and since then things did not go with him as he wished. As a bachelor we remember him to have been a jolly fellow who never knit his brows or pulled a long face.

'What was the matter Archy? Were you ill?' I asked him.

'Ill? Not I, I don't hold with illness. Never was better in my life. Only my wife wouldn't let me run down here.'

'Is she such a disciplinarian?' questioned Humphrey who was the most outspoken chap of our group.

'O gosh, what is Mussolini before her? But discipline apart, She says you are bad company. She believes bachelors are a canker to society. Sometimes she goes to such fanatic extremes as to wish, that all celebates above eighteen, were shot down mercilessly."

We all hiccoughed with a vague disaffection.

'How old is she?' I confess my question was in shocking bad taste.

'She is only nineteen' said Archy with a broad grin and a deep blush.

We looked at him with surprise and awe — not unmixed with pity.

'So young and so hard boiled!' I commented.

'Well' said Stephens sounding through his big nose, 'You needn't be so much shocked about it. Every other girl you come across is that sort. I have a wife too..............' but without completing the sentence, he thrust his pipe into his mouth and began puffing furiously.

HUMPHREY broke the awkward silence, 'let us consider Archy's trouble first. One at a time' he said with a wink, and suppressed our curiosity to know more about Stephens and his Mussolini. We shall all go on a deputation and request her, to permit Archy to spend a few hours now and then with us.

'Are you mad?' screamed out Archy in great alarm, 'Go on a deputation! Do you realise that I shall be left alone, behind, to face her? For heaven's sake, no deputation, nothing doing'.

'I am so sorry' I apologised. 'But we really want to help you dear chap.'

'Wind up your apologies' Humphrey cut me short. 'Now look here Archy, I have a plan. Why don't you keep a dog? You can come out on the pretext of giving him an airing and then you can peep in here, and get off without being suspected.'

'No' said the other much distressed. 'She wouldn't have another dog in the house beside her own Archy.

Surely, she doesn't treat you like a dog? That's more than a man can stand,' I bawled out in righteous indignation.

'Not that, old lad,' Archy was rather abashed. 'I mean to say she has a little Spaniel which is christened Archy. I confesss,' Archy continued, 'It was my being the name-sake of her puppy that got me into her favour.' With pathetic humour he added, 'Every day there is a comedy of errors. Whenever the mistress of the house calls out Archy, immediately, I would be pattering up to her room competing hard with my four-legged namesake to reach first. More often it would be the dog, She wanted. I would return without much regret, if only that conceited rascal who sat cosy on her lap, did not slant his head and look at me, with utter mockery while the lady laughed and patted his back.

'That is all right'. We all turned round. Stephens was speaking, 'I have pitched upon a big idea. If we work it out successfully, Archy will be the same old can-go-where-he-likes sort of lad that he was.' We listened with great interest to Stephens's ingenious plot. Certainly whether the scheme succeed or not it was well worth trying.

There was excited conversation downstairs. He knew the burglary had been noticed and a vague fear seized him that he may be suspected. He wrapped the rug tight round him and pretended to be sound asleep. He heard hasty footsteps approaching his room. He began snoring as he had never done in his life. In a moment he was being shaken like a bottle of medicine, and 'Archy, Archy' his wife shouted into his ears. Fear taught him caution and restraint. He slowly spread out his limbs, sat up in bed and gave out a long lingering yawn. Impatient at his indolence, his wife held him by the shoulder and gave him such a violent shake that he trembled from head to foot All the while she was screaming 'Archy is gone, Archy is gone',

'Why, here I am, why do you bother about me? I am safe,' he

mumbled out as if he was not yet out of his stupor.

' Blinking idiot, my darling little Archy has been kidnapped' she yelled out.

'Archy kidnapped !' he gasped in surprise, and like a bolt he shot out of his bed. Hither and thither he ran about the house searching for Archy. The whole house was rummaged, but there was not a trace of the missing animal. The only clue left was a small slip, which one of the servants found in the dog's cradle. On it were these words in type-script:

IF YOU INFORM THE POLICE YOUR DOG WILL BE KILLED
REDSTAIN.

Mrs. Archibald sank into the sofa. Her face was white with despair and hot tears started rolling down her cheeks. Archy rushed up to her side and caressingly mopped her cheeks.

'O, I can never see my little Archy again' she simpered and fell limp into his arms.

'Wipe away the tears, darling. Don't you have the least anxiety. Your little Archy shall be brought back to you even if it be at the risk of my life.'

'O darling" Mrs. Archy was all gratefulness. She flung her armsl round his neck and kissed him almost out of shape. And with a scared look she gasped, 'But, O dear, you shall not go. They may kill you my darling, please don't go.' Archy gently released himself, stood up to his full height and gave a courageous twist to his moustache 'They kill me ? Not they. Moreover I shall not go alone. I have some of my old comrades in the Bachelor's Club. They would dive into the devil's mouth if that would help me. I will go right now. There, you shouldn't weep any more. I will be back soon.'

Like a dart he went straight to the Bachelor's Club.

* * *

We were anxiously awaiting developments in Archy's household Archy entered, 'everything O. K. Our plan worked out clean like a T. But I must be out of home for a week. Steevy, you must give me a comfortable birth in your suburban residence as you promised, "

'Don't you worry, you shall have the best roosting possible,' assured Stephens. 'But let us flick off before we are scented out. The dog too shall be my guest. Come along Archy, cheerio lads !" Stephens left us, and both the Archies with him.

During the week of Archy's hibernation I had a little bit of work to do. Every now and then I would run up to Mrs. Archibald to keep her informed of Archy's fictitious movements. I introduced myself as a reporter—friend of her sweet-heart. Archy was suppsed to be sending me telegrams every now and then.

Ten days elapsed. It was about dusk. Somebody sounded the calling bell, but the servants were all out and Mrs. Archibald was alone in the house. She came down and opened the door. In a dusty suit, with a haggard look, and unkempt face, Archy stood with a tiny dog—her own little pet-under his arms. With a cry of delight she leaped upon him and smothered him with kisses.

'I am really proud of you Archy, dear,' she cooed.

'I had to come to grips with the most blood-thirsty set of crooks. Somehow I contrived to escape allright with our little Archy. But it is all due to those old chaps in the Bachelors' Club' whispered Archy, with an awe-inspiring look.

'Oh, I am so grateful to them' whispered back his sweet-heart.

Mrs. Archibald blushed guiltily. 'I am so sorry' she said in a tone of contrition,'but you shall be a member again and persuade them to appoint a day when we shall spend a merry after-noon with them.'

He held her tight and drew her close to him, but they felt something nestling between them. He immediately pulled up little Archy by the ears, set him down, and gave him a loving kick. He caught up his wife again and she willingly yielded.

A legal poser :—

Smith brought a suit against Jones upon a promissory note given for a horse. Jone's defence was failure of consideration, he affirming that at the time of the purchase the horse had the glanders, of which he died, and that Smith knew it. Smith replied that the horse did not have the glanders, but the distemper, and that Jones knew it when he bought him. The Judge, notorious for his want of clarity in such cases, charged the Jury thus :—" Gentlemen of the Jury, pay attention to the charge of the Court. You have already made one mistrial of this case, because you did not pay proper attention to the charge, and I don't want you to do it again. I intend to make it so clear to you this time that you cannot possibly make any mistake. This suit is upon a note given for a promissory horse. I hope you understand that. Now, if you find that at the time of the sale Smith had the glanders, and Jones knew it, Jones cannot recover. That is clear, gentlemen ; I will state it again. If you find that at the time of the sale Jones had the distemper, and Smith knew it, then Smith cannot possibly recover But, gentlemen, I will state it a third time, so that you cannot possibly make a mistake. If at the time of the sale, Smith had the glanders and Jones had the distemper, and the horse knew it, then neither Smith, Jones, nor the horse can recover. Let the records be given to the Jury. "

(Continued from page 26).

reading, that he did not notice my condition. When I woke up, the clock struck eleven, and the rain was still pouring. Rajan was going on reading, absolutely unmindful of the world around him. I offered a silent prayer to the Almighty to hasten the end.

"The Heroine is so disgusted" he was now commenting, "with every one of them that she marries, as a protest, a man who doesn't appear in the play at all—that is Poetic Justice. And of course, the last scene ends in a magnificant tableau—with all the actors assembled on the stage." He stopped, but the rain outside did not.

"Well ' he demanded triumphantly.

"It is much clearer," I smiled.

"The plot ? "

"No the weather ! "

"But the plot, old man," persisted Rajan, ' I mean, the drama, do you think it will hold, is it good ? "

' Good ? " I answered, "Good, is not the word for it ! " and I went out into the beating rain.

THE LOVING COUPLE.

A man had once a vicious wife
(A very common thing in life),
His days and nights were spent in strife
Unceasing.
Her tongue went glibly all day long.
Sweet contradiction still her song,
And all the poor man did was wrong,
And ill done.
He ev'ry soothing art display'd—
In vain he wooed, in vain he sued,
Failing in all, to Heav'n he prayed
To take her.
Once walking by a river side,
In mournful terms, " My dear " he cried,
" No more let feuds our peace divide.
I'll end them.
Weary of life, and quite resigned,
To drown I have made up my mind
So tie my hands as fast behind
As can be."
With eager haste the dame complies,
While joy stands glistening in her eyes,
Already in her thought he dies
Before her.
" Yet when I view the rolling tide,
Nature revolts, " he said ; " beside,
I would not be a suicide,
And die thus :
" It would be better far I think,
While close I stand upon the brink,
You push me in—nay, never shrink,
But do it ! "
To give the blow the more effect,
Some twenty yards she ran direct,
And did what she could least expect
She should do.
He slips aside himself to save,
So souse she dashes in the mane,
And gave what ne'er before she gave—
Much pleasure.
" Dear husband, help ! I sink ! " she cried,
" My loving wife ! " the man replied,
" I would—but you my hands have tied :
Lord help Ye ! "

These Insurance Agents

By Ram Saran Sharma.

WORD has gone round that the sky is all dark, that there are distant mutterings of the storm and that it may burst any moment. People sit in the bars and whisper with bated breaths. Wiseacres shake their heads, and Sherlock Holmes has gone on six months' leave.

And all this because Mr. Sharma is on the war-path. I am going to declare war on these Insurance pests--not agents, if you please.

Whoever called them agents I wonder. They are a pest, a nuisance, a calamity, a catastrophy, a... never mind, they are anything but agents.

I always thought--and you too--that agents were meek-looking, spectacled, nervous, short men, who hanged round your place to have an opportunity to see you. And when you ever condescended to grant an interview, they nervously fidgeted, before you while you eyed them with a s o m b r e I-am-somebody look.

But these Insurance blokes they walk into your house with as much cool unconcern as if they were your fast chums. They come in tip-top fashion, to overawe your chaprasi and with nonchalance, smoke your choice cigarettes and go only after they have killed your two-hours and then too with the threat of repeated visits until, of course, you get insured.

YOU fume inwardly and wish the fellow to go to the devil. Your morning is killed. Your tea-effect of general well being is gone, your cigarette-tin looks empty for he has smoked with vengeance. You wonder if you could prosecute him for tress-pass Atleast I do. And what is more I feel that the law of tress-pass should be made so stringent as to have transportation as its penalty. In the alternative this game of Insurance pests should be declared unlawful.

The other morning as I was sadly contemplating the empty cups of tea and the emptier cigarette-tin my clock struck ten. There you are, thought I, a Sunday-morning killed.

Sighing at the loss I got up determined not to allow any more invaders.

Lo, and behold! in walked a gentleman-he looked one, at least-and wishing me a very cheery good-morning sat down on a chair.

I offered him a smoke. I had to, you see. He lighted it and then blew out a cloud of smoke.

"To what do I owe the honour of your visit" I asked putting on my best smile.

"I am an agent of the Perfecta Insurance Co.," was the warm reply. The smile froze and the face became longer.

"But I am sorry, I don't intend to be insured. Some other time..."

"But you see, ours are the best terms... ..."

And he opened all his papers and books and plunged into a whirl-pool of figures, only coming to the surface to sing praises of his Company. The gist of all of which was that his Company accepted nothing as premiums—only as much as my tailor's bills, and how much that is only a married man knows—and paid huge profits, dividends and what nots.

Well, I told him that nobody up-to the seventh generation upwards in my family had ever cared for profits and all the drab that he wanted me to earn.

Finally when I did manage to get rid of him my cigarette-tin was empty. And the time was 1. P. M.

I cursed the times, and longed for the good old days when the dagger was the easiest way of removing undesirables——from one's path.

I had hardly composed myself enough to get up when my servant came to announce a gentleman. And before I could say a word there he was walking at his heels.

I made up my mind.

"I hope I am not disturbing you" said he with his blandest smile.

"Oh, yes you are" said I.

He stared at me unable to understand my meaning.

"And what is more," I continued, "I don't want to see you."

The fellow got up with every expression of injured vanity. I got wild at his cheek. He continued to stare at me.

"Do you hear me?" I yelled, "I don't want to have anything to do with you."

"I am afraid," said he "there is a misunderstanding."

The impudent rogue.

"No, there isn't and if there is it is in your bloming head."

"Well," he said, "you shall hear of it"

And next day do you know what happened?

I had to find a new house for he was the son of the land-lord come to see about the drainage

D——n these Insurance agents!

Letters from My Son-in-law

By Father-in-law.

My dear father-in-law,

I AM very sory to hear that you intend standing as a candidate for election to the Legislative Council. For a conscientious man like you, who hates humbug and hypocrisy, politics will hardly be suitable either as a hobby or as a vocation. If you want some recreation, some pleasant diversion, yon can take up gardening, or yoga practice, or fishing. I wonder, how of all things on earth you pitched upon politics. It is a dirty game; 'it is the last refuge of a scoundrel!'

It is all right so long as it serves some useful purpose, so long as it is a means to an end. But what the end is exactly, nobody has any idea. One man says it is Swaraj, another says it is Self Government within the Empire and another, without. The moderate is prepared to accept something, while the extremist refuses to be satisfied with anything less than complete independence. You see, there is no unanimity among the ranks of our politicians, they don't know what they are fighting for or why. In fact, with most of our politicians, it is not a means to an end, but the end in itself!

POLITICS is a very hard task master and you have neither the time nor the energy for it. Of course you have plenty of money, more than what you need or deserve, and you can afford to spend any amount on the election campaign. Money counts a great deal in these elections and you are sure to succeed. But, for heaven's sake, can you not think of a more useful and judicious method of spending money, if the urge to spend has taken possesion of you in such an overwhelming manner? Why not transfer a part of the surplus to poor me? You can at least have the satisfaction of contributing towards the happiness of one, poor, struggling individual. Money spent in elections is a sheer waste, I would even go to the extent of saying, criminal waste, in these days of financial depression!

After all, what is it that you hope to achieve? You cannot get your money back even in the shape of travelling allowance which has been reduced to a pittance, on the score of economy. And then, our Legislative Councils are nothing more than mere debating societies. Even the debates are not of a very high order. They have absolutely no power to do anything except, talk, talk and talk. You may pass any number of resolutions, or move for the 'Adjournment' of the House as many times as you like, but what is the net result of it all? You cannot reduce any of the taxes, you cannot stop the import of foreign rice, you cannot introduce prohibition or provide relief for the unemployed—you cannot prevent even the bugs usurping your seats, in the council chamber unless Government is convinced that there will be no breach of the peace!

The only thing you can do is to ask a number of silly questions, for which you will get no answer. I have attended one or two meetings of the council and I find that the question time is more interesting than the rest of the agenda. What a variety of questions our M. L. Cs ask? One enthusiastic member asks in all seriousness whether the Government is aware that the municipal lantern in some street of his town is not allowed to burn during

the whole of the night, if not why not? Another patriot is anxious to find out if government is aware of the scandalous fact that the temple tank in his town goes dry in summer and overflows its banks in winter? An Iyenger member wants to know how many Vaishnavites there are in the judicial department, a Mudaliar wants to know how many Mudaliars there are in the police department, the Muhumadun M. L. C. tries to ascertain why there are no Muhamadans on the Hindu Religious endowments Board, and the Member for Depressed classes asks everytime the council meets how many men belonging to the depressed classes there are in each department! And every member invariably winds up his question with 'If not, why not?' If the questions are funny, the answers are often more amusing!

Some times government does not care to answer at all and all the elaborate questioning is a mere of waste of time. The whole thing is absurd from beginning to end.

Of course you can earn cheap notoriety by straightaway tabling a motion of no-confidence. But if you are really anxious to become notorions, why should you come all the way to Madras and at such great expense? There is not the ghost of a chance of your being invited to form a Ministry because you are neither a Justicite nor a Congressman. You may not even be able to obtain a comfortable seat, because seats are arranged on the basis of the Party System and if you do not belong to any party, you may in all probability be accommodated somewhere up in the galleries or outside in the verandah! You are not a very impressive speaker and I am afraid you will be a misarable failure as a legislator

If you want to enter public life, I would suggest your entering the local municipal council. You can do something you can at least have a brilliant petromax light put up infront of your house. And if you are lucky enogh to be elected as the chairman, you can wield enormous power, provided you placate the commissioner. You can have plenty of servants at your command, merchants and contractors will vie with one another in propitiating you and you can be virtual ruler of the little town, provided you set about it in the right direction.

I would advice you therefore, excuse my presumption—to withdraw at once, and get back the deposit.

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Plays and Players on Stage and Screen

Buster Keaton, the noted "frozen-faced" comedian is to entertain the audiences of German and Italian Cinemas in their native tongues. He will make a picture in both languages in Vienna next

Ginger Rogers.

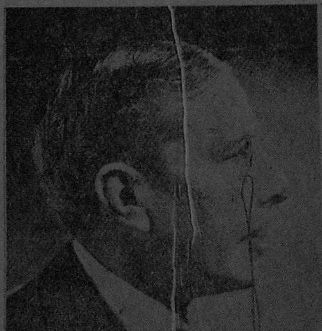
month. He made Spanish and French pictures last year. Including English, that makes five languages in which Keaton can be funny.

Marry Boland, narrowly escaped being severely burned when a couch on which she was sitting suddenly burst into flames during the filming of the picture, "People Will Talk."

The comedienne, smoking a cigarette between takes, dropped an ash that fell between the side of the couch and the cushions. The ash touched a piece of motion picture film that had been inadvertently left there and flames immediately shot up around her as she leaped to safety. Workers on the set extinguished the blaze before any great damage was done.

Clark Gable hopes to make a novel trip over London as soon as his studio engagements permit.

The programme will take him by 'plane to Rio de Janeiro, then to Europe as a passenger on the Graf Zeppelin, the return to America abroad the new French liner, 'Normandie,' and by 'plane back to Hollywood.



George Arliss

His desire is to make the trip in less than a month.

Raoul Roulien's devotion to pretty Conchita Montenegro is known to all their friends. He

Marlene Dietrical.

demonstrated his devotion when he talked to his beloved recently by long distance telephone, for Raoul was in Hollywood, whilst Conchita was on the steamship 'Europa,' bound for France. The telephone bill was $. 185.

The couple will not admit that an engagement exists, but romance appears to be in the air.

Jack Oakie, the youthful comedian, is noted for a shrewd business man and

money has a way of flowing in his direction.

The actor made two records from songs he sang in "College Rhythm" and has received a handsome cheque from the phonograph company which will sell the records. So Jack is preparing to produce more records—killing two birds with on stone: pleasing his admirers and adding to his bank account.

Do you know :—

Ronald Colman and Clark Gable sacrificed their famous moustaches the same day—Colman for his role in M—G—M's "A Tale of " Two cities " and Gable for Mutiny on the Bounty."

The engagement is announced between Jackie Coogan and Miss Toby Wing, both screen artistes.

Ida Lupino, daughter of the British actor Stanley Lupino, will be Harold Lloyd's leading lady in his new comedy " The Milky Way."

Norma Shearer Named her new baby girl Katherine after Katherine Cornelly who has long been her favourite stage star.

Eddie Cantor.

A scene from " Purna Chandra."

FILMS TO SEE

PARAGON

" Barrets of Wimpole Street.',

(*M. G. M.*)

Directed by:—Sidney Franklin.

Chief Actors :—Charles Laughton, Norma Shearer, Fredric March, Maureen O Sullivan and Katharine Alexander.

This great picture comes again to Madras :—Edward Moulton Barrett's three daughters live like prisoners, suffocated and repressed by his overpowering and possessive affection. Elizabeth, the eldest of the three, has lost all will to live and her only means of escape is through the medium of the poetry she writes. Her writings attract Robert Browning, the poet, into the gloomy household of the Barretts, but his advances to beautiful Elizabeth are resented by Edward Barret. From Browning however Elizabeth draws the power which gives her strength to shake off the spiritual and mental domination of her posssessive parent.

As Edward Barrett, Charles Laughton is a one-man entertainment in himself. Norma Shearer and Fredric March

rise to great heights in daringly ecstatic love scenes as the romantic couple of the story. Maureen O'Sullivarn in the role of Henrietta, the younger sister, stands out prominently from a distinguished supporting cast. This picture is one of the best productions of 1934.

Film-fans who have missed this great picture will surely run to "Paragon" to see it.

Crime Doctor (*RKO=Radio.*)

Directed by :—John Robertson.

Chief Actors :—Otto Kruger, Karen Morley, Nils Asther, Judith Wood, and Donald Crisp.

The picture is interesting as containing a study of the mental aberrations of a man who commits a cold-blooded murder in order to bring another man to death.

Otto Kruger however has been miscast in the role of Dan Gifford. Nils Asther as Eric Anderson and Karen Morley as Andra do their parts quite well: Don't miss this film.

WELLINGTON:

'Death takes a Holiday.'

(*Paramount.*)

Chief Actors :—Frederic March, Sir Guy Standing, Evelyn Venable, Kent Taylor, and Helen Westly.

This film is something entirely new in film subjects. It is a fascinating subject thrillingly told and superbly acted by a notable cast. Frederic March gives an extraordinary and remarkable portrayal as Death, who comes to earth in Human from in order to try and discover why men fear him. Frederic equals if not surpasses, his outstanding achievent in "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," as Death he is superb. You should not miss this film. It accomplishes something that very few films manage to do; it makes one stop to wonder.

Miriam Hopkins.

Miss Ermeline as she appears in " Gaiby Insan."

REVIEW.

We have received a copy of " The Puzzle " a fortnightly edited by Mr. N. B. S. Maniam. Well got up and highly interesting, " The Puzzle " caters to the tastes of one and all. We wish it every success. Price One Anna.

We have received a copy of " The Story Magazin " a monthly devoted to " Fun, Fiction and Facts ' It is well got up and, profusely illustrated. Though one finds much of Mythology in its pages it gives an hour's pleasant reading and deserves every success. It is priced As. 2.

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WATCH FOR THEM.

The Man in the Street

By Dr. CYNICUS.

I wonder, my dear reader, if you have ever come across this mysterious and awe-inspiring personage: if you do, may I beg of you to detain him by force if necessary and phone or wireless me immediately?

Some of my very best productions have been rejected by the Editor, on the score that the humour contained in them will not appeal to the 'Man in the Street', suggesting thereby that this bulwark of democracy, this guardian angel of Conscientiuos editors, is essentially a humorous in dividual. I have not challenged the Editor to produce the gentleman or my cross examination, lest my literary career should be cut short in the prime of its youth. I am convinced, however, that all this talk of the 'Man in the Street' and his unerring judgement, is mere moonshine.

I can as well, take my case to the man in the moon!

I DARE say it is one of the ardent ambitions of every writer, to witness the spectacle of his writings bening read and discussed by his readers. But the trouble is, this so called Mr—Man—in—the—Street who represents the reading public, is either not in the street when you are out in search of him, or, if he is he happens to be reading something else, or not reading anything at all, but simply gazing at the stars. I used to spend most of my evenings loitering about in the vicinity of book-stall and News-Agencies in the hope of catching my mythical client, but as ill-luck would have it, almost every one who purchased a copy would fold it up neatly, put it into his pocket and take the next tram or bus. Once or twice I have even tried to follow them, but without a single exception, all those attempts ended in a wild-goose chase.

I have given up the job as hopeless and, added one more to my long and interesting list of unrealized ambitions!

* * *

As a regular contributor, I had the inestimable privilege of unrestricted entry into the *Sanctum-Sanctorum.* The editor received me with his usual kindness—or, was there an extra dose of cordiality in the greeting—? Perhaps! We talked of the weather, we deplored the financial stringency, we congratulated each other on the well deserved popularity of the Magazine, discussed ways and means of improving its quality still further, we dabbled in politics for a while, and we consumed a packet of cigarettes.

"I say, by-the-bye, what about those two manuscripts of mine?" I gently broke the ice. "When are they appearing? I should say they are about the best I have done so far."

"I am afraid," the Editor began, searching amongst the heap before him, "I have to disappoint you this time," and he handed me back the precious sheets. "You see, they are not quite up to the mark-eh-? mean,

your humour is far too subtle for the '*Average Reader*'. You see my point —the '*Man in the Street*' must be able to understand and appreciate it I am sure, you are capable of better stuff!"

You could have struck me down with your breath—I was literally shocked.

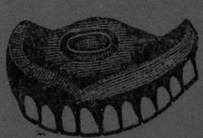
"Oh, it does not matter, thanks"—I am afraid my smile was too artificial to pass unnoticed But an Editor is an Editor, and discretion is always the better part of valour especially in dealing with Editors, lunatics and women. We shook hands as if nothing had happened.

I came out fretting, fuming and cursing the whole brood of Editors, 'Average Readers' and 'Men in the Street,' and wishing the whole lot of them deep down in the gutter. If any one of them had crossed my path at that moment, I would have smashed him to pieces, and surrendered myself at the nearest police station for wilful manslaughter. Almost machanically. I crossed the street, walked into a coffee-hotel and took my seat. I was dimly conscious of some one at my back repeating a long list of luscious names, but my eyes were focussed on a gentleman sitting just in front, and trying the impossible feat of dividing his attention between the pages of a closely-printed Magazine and the slippery slices of a *Rava-dosai* soaked in *Sambhar*! My joy knew no bounds, at last the one great ambition of my life was about to be fulfilled, I had discovered the 'Average Reader.' I had met the 'Man in the Street'!

It was the very magazine which contained one of my contributions. I ordered two cups of strong coffee, and began sipping it leisurely, and riveting my gaze on the dear reader opposite But he seemed to be in no particular hurry I was on page fourteen and he was still on see page four. I had drunk both the cups, but I was determined not to lose the opportunity. I had the rejected manuscripts in my pocket, and surely if he was a gentleman, he wouldn't grudge me a few minutes of his precious time, to glance through the manuscripts and give me his unbiassed opinion. I ordered a full plate of '*Poori* and *Potatoes*.' What did I care if the waiter looked askance at this abnormal procedure, or even if the whole world laughed at me?

My 'average reader' was still on page four, whill I had exhausted the plates before with an agonising slowness: the suspense was simply unbearable: and I had tasted almost all the items in the menu twice over. Thank God he was at last on page thirteen—the unlucky thirteen! By that time I was nearly suffocated by the unwanted food I had sent in, and just at the critical moment when he turned over and came to the page containing my story, my interior registered a mighty protest and drove out the unwelcome intruders! I vomitted the whole liquid and solid lot, tumbled out of my seat, and gathered around me a regular crowd of sight-seers. Some one said I was drunk, another felt my pulse and helped me on to my chair, a third suggested sending for medical aid and the proprietor brought me a glass of iced-water. But in the cofusion that prevailed, the "Man in the Street," 'the Average Reader," whose sympathy I had so elaborately planned to enlist —had given me the slip! I can now definitely and boldly assert that, the 'Man in the Street' and 'the Average Reader" on whom Editors swear, are not noly not humorous, but absolutely callous and indifferent towards the sufferings of their fellow men. My bill had run up to three rupees and odd, including the iced-water, and I was charged a rupee and a half in addition, for cleaning and disinfecting the premises!

You will now understand, gentle reader, why I am so anxious to meet the 'Man in the Street.' He is morally bound to pay me back the four rupees and odd that I have spent on his account; if he is not prepared to do that, let him at least do me the favour of going through the rejected manuscripts and say whether he agrees with the Editor!



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OUR BARBER

BY Narayan

OUR barber is Kittu—he belongs to our village. To hear him talk, you'd think the village belongs to him. And so it does, in a manner of speaking—at least a portion of it. The tufts and beards and moustaches of a decade's, ten-month's and six month's growth of the men folk belong to Kittu. For him they grow and to him they return. But what he lays claim to, is the honour of being the one man sought after by all in the village—the big and the small, the fat and the lean the old and the middle-aged and the young. All need him. All seek him.

HE is the only barber in our village and he is proudly conscious of the distinction. When he goes his morning rounds with his leather-kit, he has an air of importance about him. He knows anxious heads await him, trembling chins await his razor.

The village head-man rises one fine morning and casually runs the palm of his hand across his chin and swears! A grisly beard—hairs stiff as thorns! He must have a shave. Kittu is sent for. He is the man.

Safety-razors have not made their debut in our village homes. Nobody believes in these new, dangerous things. Besides, to shave one-self! There seems no end to the stupid lengths these town-people go even to becoming a barber.

So Kittu is the uncrowned king of the shaving world of our little village. He has no rivals, He has no equals, and he discharges his onerous duty with credit—that of making people presentable.

Kittu's implements are few. A good wo[illegible]an needs but few tools—a razo[illegible]ike thing, a honing-stone and a [illegible]air of scissors, and with these he works wonders. He shaves, he trims whiskers, he crops, manicures and he does all sorts of things with folks' heads and their hair. There is no fashion in hair-cutting that he does not know. English, American, Ceylonese, Japanese, Mongoleon...... Hear him talk of the variety of moustaches he can produce. You would be amazed. They are infinite. And all these done in an instant. His speed of execution is something marvellous. He is the supreme creative-artist of our village.

And he is much more. He is the local doctor, devil-exorciser, politician, music-critic and scandal-monger, all rolled into one. There is not a single detail of the village life that his wagging tongue does not touch, or his talk leave unadorned. All things under the sun are discussed by him while the *razor* grunts and squeaks across your chin.

We are sorry we could not include in this issue the second and final instalment of "Stabbed In The Back" by Mr. P. S. Sha. The fact of it, is that illustrations for the story were delayed and therefore had to be crowded out. We sincerely apologise and promise its inclusion in the next issue without fail.

And the razor—it has seen better days. Now it ought to retire to a well-earned rest. But Kittu insists that it is quite good and its temper excellent. But when it screeches along the face it doesn't seem to show much good-temper. Minor cuts and bruises are trifle. Only when the razor strays far inside, that the person wakes up to protest. But in vain. Kittu proceeds unmoved, mindful only of his duty. When the ordeal is over you thank your stars and get away.

But the heat of these minor fights between the cheek and the razor is lessened by Kittu's discourses. When Kittu comes to shave, it is not one of your business-like, soap and brush hurried shaves—but a real, thick 100 per cent shave. In the first place no soap and brush come here. They are superfluous, unnecessary. Kittu follows the neat, straight forward form of wetting the beard with water and running the razor vigorously up and down the cheeks twice or thrice. Most of the hair and bits of skin come off.

And he does not straight away go about it either, That is not shaving, He begins while he strops his razor with a remark about your paleness and how the weather is so bad and crops damaged, whether you know about the quarrel between Masilamani Thevar and his cousin and would you please come nearer? Sir You obey and he sets about his work. But all the time he talks and asks you questions, You only hum in reply. You can't speak, neither shake your head. You are in *barbarous* hands. His razor roars. You simply resign yourself to fate.

At last it is over. Shaved, moustaches trimmed, manicured Kittu packs, and leaves politely. Somebody is waiting for him next doors. And you go to examine your cuts in a mirror.

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A HARMONY

BY

Jaganathan.

HUNGER and love are the two great main-springs of life, and marriage supplies all that is best in our arts. In the drama of love, it is the man that plays the more active part, almost to crazy foolishness, and the woman, the apparent passive factor. Eve wants to be courted for ever, uninterruptedly, and her form and charms are so bewitchingly moulded as to move even the most modest of men to perform the most exquisite acrobatic feats.

Kamala Bai, a charming girl of about 19 or 20 with a bag in her hand was hurriedly passing into the central station. Her face showed that she had left her home in a fit of passion. Indeed, her husband a strong, pleasant, fair youth, with a fur overcoat, neatly folded over his arm was following her silently The sly glances she threw at him from the corner of her eyes showed that she was aware of his pursuit. The rosy tinges on her cheeks showed the smouldering fire in her, and every now and then a flicker of a smile hovered over her lips only to disappear as quickly as it had appeared.

SHE purchased a second class ticket for Bangalore and Santhanam purchased another and followed her like a shadow. A few minutes later, Santhanam and Kamala were seated in the same compartment with plenty of space between them. The train was jogging along and the cool open air, acted as a balm to his heated brow. She was reclining apparently indifferent to his presence, but now and then darted sly glances at him as though she was enjoying his pitiable plight. Then she took up the latest copy of "Funny Magazin" and was steadily scanning it's pages. As luck would have it, her silk scented kerchief flew down and her gallant husband picked it up and handed it back to her.

"Thanks" murmured Kamala.

'I am sorry', began Santhanam, you left so suddenly. May I know the reason for this sudden caprice ?'. He moved nearer and his hand stealthily sought hers.

"Don't touch me, or talk to me. You called me your old Girl; of course you see nothing charming in me.

I do not want to live with such an unkind husband".

"My dear girl," Santhanam submissively said, "I call you, 'My Old Girl' only in an endearing way. I am sorry you have misunderstood it. You are the sweetest, dearest, kindest, little angel—"

"Shut up—she silenced him and turned her face away. A very cold wind was blowing and it began to rain in torrents. They both shivered. He took up his great fur-coat, and wrapped himself up and sat down with a sigh. A few minutes passed.

"Don't you see me shivering ?" she asked "Yes"—my darling, you do awfully. But you have commanded me not to approach you-"Santhanam meekly explained. 'You are a brute"- suddenly exploded Kamala. "Here, take this" he gave the fur coat and cover your tiny self", I don' want you to sit there with your teeth chattering "

Why shouldn't we both share it ? she said while a mischevous smile played about her lips. In a minute the great fur-coat had enveloped the two. They could almost hear the loud beating of their hearts. Only their two heads peeped out above. Santhanam was immensely happy to feel the warm body of his wife pressing against his own. He turned his face and soon they were looking into each other's eyes. His arms now deliberately encircled her waist and their lips were iresistably drawn into one long kiss.

When at last she disengaged her lips, her face full of mirth, she asked him, "Why didn't you try it before ?"

"Because I was a fool. Now I know what to do whenever these pretty lips of yours pout."

Again and again the reconciled lovers pecked at each others lips warmly bundled up in the comfortable fur over-coat.

He was so immensely happy now that he could have kissed her fur cloak——only it was inside her box

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"Janaki! Janaki!!"
No reply.

"Where are you, Janaki?"

The hall was calm (of course, not as calm as the walking of an ant could be heard) without the least possible sound vibrations which could be fairly detected by a human ear. Just then I returned from Madhav's house after discussing almost everything under the sun. I bawled out for my sweet Janaki—I mean my legitimate wife. After three are four howls, I heard a cooing noise. It was from my bed-room. I stood stern and silent for one minute and forty-five seconds expecting that the coo would be repeated but my hopes became hopeless.

I know, Janaki is a mischivous minx of the first water. For my part I belive that there cannot be any other blessed or cursed girl who is more mischivious than my sweet Janaki. What can I do? Law says that I am her husband and she my wife. I must forbear.

I gently pushed the door of my bed-room and entered like a lamb (book worms, not Charles lamb, please). She covered herself in a Cashmir shawl which I had newly bought. She covered her face also, turning a deaf ear to the counsel given by the pedagogue who would advise that the face should not be covered in order to allow a good exhale and inhale of air for the lungs. I walked as silently as I could and sat by her side on the cot. I allowed my hand to reach her rosy cheeks when she growled. "I am suffering from severe head-ache. Please sit on that chair and allow me to sleep here comfortably. Do not tease me, please. I am not in good humour".

All the while I was thinking that she was playing the usual joke but when she uttered those words, I shivered at her talk and quivered like an insect.

"Why do you look so gloom dear? Anything wrong with your health?" I questioned as a loving husband would necessarily do.

"I have already told you that I am suffering from head-ache, not an ordinary one but the severest. How many times have I to tell you? Will you be kind enough to take your seat on that chair". She said with an air of fury.

> A Chicago commercial had just booked the last sleeping car space, when an elderly lady waiting to book after him burst into tears, saying: "I must have a berth on that train—it is a matter of life and death." The commercial gent allowed her to purchase his ticket, taking one himself for the following day. Next morning his astonished wife received a telegram from him saying: "Will not arrive until to-morrow. Gave birth to old lady last night."

"Shall I apply some pain balm to your dear forehead?" I queried in a sympathetic tone.

> A lady candidate at a Municipal election while canvassing, asked a voter, "may I request you to support me?"
>
> "Good Lord" replied the astonished voter, "I have already a wife and three children. Still, as you are a nice looking young lady, I have no objection to support you, provided, you don't mention it to anybody."

"No".

"Amrutanjan, dear", said I staring at the Amurtanjan calender.

"No, I say".

"It is already past eleven. If you take your meal the head-ache lessens gradually".

"Do not tease me. I am not feeling hungry. You had better go and take your meal".

"If you are suffering from such a severe head-ache, my mischiveous darling, why don't you allow me to apply Amrutanjan?"

"Because I can't".

"Why?"

"Ask the Almighty".

"You look gloomy and sullen?"

"Yes, please. I do feel morose. What do you want now?"

"Then, why don't you make use of some pain balm"

"That is my fate, my lord. Let me feel comfortable by enjoying the fruits of the distracted speculations of a dismal mind. Do not tease this poor wench".

"Why poor, dear? Are we not rich enough?"

'Yes. Rich enough with vain promises!"

I tried with all my physical efforts to control the unavoidable laughter I was getting and of course succeeded to some extent. Now, I could know that all the fuss she had made was only for the sake of a new saree.

I said "Oh! you want a new saree, it seems. The saree which you demanded from me on last Thursday for fetching my cigarette case from the hall into the bed-room! Am I not correct? Rather a heavy conveyance charge, darling".

She hid her face under the shawl.

All my efforts to make her speak became futile. At last I said, "it is under the pillow on which your majesty has slept".

Without a moment's hesitation, she woke up like a spring toy. She began her quest. She threw the bed-sheet, pillows and all pell-mell. She was becoming irritable. The saree was not there.

I do not know what might have happened had I not accosted her to open her trunk whose duplicate key was with me.

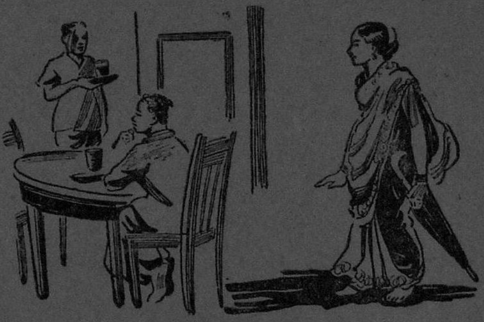
MY UMBRELLA

BY **ANON.**

ONE morning recently as I was about to start from my home, I noticed that it was raining very hard outside, and as I turned to the rack to get an

umbrella I was surprised to find that out of five umbrellas, there was not one in the lot I could use. On the impulse of the moment I decided to take the whole five down to the umbrella shop and have them all repaired at once.

Just as I started from the house, my wife asked me to be sure and bring her umbrella back as she wanted to use it that evening. This imprest the subject of umbrellas very vividly on my mind that I did not fail to leave the five umbrellas to be repaired, stating I would call for them on



my way home in the evening.

When I went to lunch at noon it was still raining very hard. I sat down at a table, and had been there only a few minutes when a young lady came in and

sat down at the same table with me. I was first to finish, however, and geting up I absentmindedly picked up her umbrella and started for the door. She called out to me and reminded me that I had her umbrella, where upon I returned it to her with much embarrassment and many apologies.

This incident served to impress the subject of umbrellas more deeply on my mind, so on my way home in the evenin- I called for my umbrellas, bought a news

paper, and boarded a tram-car. I was deeply engrossed in my newspaper, having placed the five umbrellas by my side, but all at once I had a peculiar feeling of some

one staring at me. Suddenly I looked up from my paper and was surprised to see

Man wants but little here below,

He's not so hard to please ;

But woman—bless her little heart,

Wants everything she sees !

sitting directly opposite to me the same young woman I met in the restaurant ! She

had a broad smile in her face, and looking straight into my eyes she said knowngly: "You have had a successful day, to-day haven't you ?"

Engagements.

21st Saturday :—The members of the society for the suppression of Puranic and Religious Films will march in a grand procession from one end of the city to the other, as a protest against the production of such talkies :—"Original Valli", "Duplicate Ramayanam" "Naveena Sarangadhara" "Sangeetha Droupadi Vastrapaharan" "Harischandra with T. P. Rajalakshmi in the title role of *Harischandra*", etc.

Dr. Yerumaivaganam will deliver a lecture on "How to sneeze, cough and blow your nose in public" under the auspices of the League for the Promotion of Better Public Hygiene.

22nd Sunday :—The Rev. Pistol Blacksmith will preach an open air sermon at the Triplicane Beach, on the "Great and Unpardonable Sin of Violating the Sabbath Day."

Mr. S. V. Subbiah Baghavathar will perform a Harikatha Kalakshepam on "The evils of drink", at Hotel Bosotto, at 5-30 p.m. Emmanuel's orchestra will play suitable tunes in German and French.

26th Thursday :—The Director of Public Morals will open a newly constructed window in the premises of the Sarada Rescue Home, at 2 p.m.

27th Friday :—Representatives of the City Prostitutes will interview the Home Member on the urgent need of alleviating their sufferings as a result of the Brothel Act.

Mr. Singaram Pandithan will deliver a lecture on "Unemployment among barbers as a result of the introduction of Safety Razors and the refusal of Brahmin widows to share their heads". Rao Bahadur Rama Rao Holkar will preside.

The City Congress Volunteers will hold a meeting at the High Court Beach, and pass resolutions requesting Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders, to revive picketting, Satyagraha or some other form of employment or in the alternative to pay them each a sum of Rs. 35 per month for pocket expenses during the period of political inactivity.

The Path to Freedom

By Sheikh Iftekhar Rasool.

RAJINDER was sitting moodily in a corner listening to his radiogramophone when Mohan was ushered into the room.

'Hallo,' said Rajinder tonelessly. 'Take a seat, old boy. You will find cigarettes by your elbow.'

'Thanks,' said Mohan. 'But, I say, whatever's that you're playing?'

'It's a new record I got today.' replied Rajinder.

'A bit dismal, isn't it?'

'It fits my present mood,' replied Rajinder, sighing. 'But I'll stop it if you wish.'

'Please do, there's a good chap,' said Mohan.

RAJINDER removed the record reluctantly.

'Let's have something bright and breezy,' suggested Mohan sociably. 'A spot of jazz, for instance.'

'Not now, if you don't mind,' pleaded Rajinder. I really could'nt stand any cheerful music just at present.'

'Good,' said Mohan comfortably. 'No music at all is even better than good music.'

'You don't like gramophones then?' queried Rajinder.

'Can't stick them at any price,' admitted Mohan candidly. 'They give me a pain in the diaphram.'

Rajinder sighed.

'I wish, said he, that I felt the same about them. My problems would be solved if I did.

'Your problem?' echoed Mohan staring. 'I don't understand.'

Rajinder gulped.

'That gramophone,' he explained simply, 'has ruined my life. That's what I mean. We were happy—Sheila and I-until that gramophone entered our home.'

'Then,' suggested Mohan reasonably, 'why not pitch it out of the window?'

'I can't. old boy,' said he. 'I only wish I could. But it's impossible. It has too great a hold on me, It—it sounds silly, I know, but it's the solemn truth. I—I couldn't live without it. I crave for gramophone music with all the intensity of a drug-fiend craving for his drug. Why, I've given up tennis, bridge-in fact, all my hobbies, because I cant tear myself away from the gramophone I listen to it every evening and the whole of every week-end. I've got hundreds of records in almost all languages and I buy about twenty a week.' He sighed heavily. 'In short, old boy, I'm an incurable gramophone addict.'

There was a brief silence.

'You were saying,' said Mohan delicately, at length,'something about trouble with your wife.'

'I was,' said Rajinder wretchedly, 'Sheila has quarrelled with me about the gramophone. And I can't find it in my heart to blame her, poor girl. She liked the gramophone well enough at first. In fact, it was she who insisted on us getting it. But lately she says it has driven her almost crazy. She declares, quite truthfully, that I spend more time with it than I do with her.'

'And you say,' queried Mohan, lifting his eyebrows, 'that you can t give it up?'

'I can't,' said Rajinder hopelessly. 'I've tried. Heaven knows I've tried. But it's no good.'

'And your wife—er—what is she doing about it?'

'She has done it,' said Rajinder simply.

'Done it?'

'My wife,' explained Rajinder, 'has left me.'

Mohan sat bolt upright in his chair, staring.

'No!' he exclaimed incredulously.

'She went this morning,' affirmed Rajinder brokenly. 'And she swears she will not come back until I've got rid of my gramophone.'

Mohan stared hard and long at Rajinder. And then, glancing at his watch, he rose purposely to his feet.

'You're—you're not going?' stammered Rajinder, in surprise.

'I am,' said Mohan grimly. 'I must hurry before the shops shut. I'm going to buy a gramophone.'

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A Blind Chance

BY
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A HIGH wind howled and shrieked demoniacally. Large drops of rain fell flat on his face. He looked down across the garden square. Ominous shifting shadows of the giant branches, and the rustle of falling trees shook him with fear. Cautiously he grasped the parapet and drew himself to safety. The hinges creaked and with a snap the glass doors yielded. The blinds gently drawn aside, he slipped into the room. Was it a room or a hall? He was not sure. He flashed his torch over a big marble topped desk and a cane bottomed chair. Somewhere about the room a clock ticked its time away. With the stealthy step of cat Jimy Brown crossed the room into an antechamber. A big shining silver knob showed itself in the stark darkness of the place. His heart jumped to his throat. Why! It was what he was after. A huge safe—who knows with millions in it and what is more it was open. He was clean puzzled—was Jimy. What was the swell idea any way? He knew safes with nasty mechanism like revolving knives and the like in them. But what of that. He must have something to go home with. One just couldn't see his children starve. He was driven to the necessity. Jimmy started wildly at the open safe. Diamonds glistered and illuminated the steal walls. He slipped two fingers and clutched at a necklace. The next instant the room smelt lightly of cigarette and Jimmy heard footsteps coming. Jimmy crouched himself behind a white cotton curtain and held his breath. His knees went wobbly under him. His hands clutched at his throat in sheer white fear. A bag of nerves he was. The room was flooded with light. A tall thinnish man with a cigarette between his lips walked slowly into the room. Towards the curtain Jimmy gently jerked himself to the wall and stood by it as though nailed into it. He felt life was fast ebbing out of him. The man was coming direct towards him and dashed his head against a side of the curtain. Oh! Mother, yelled the old man. "I say, Jake, you idot, why didn't you tell me you removed the curtain to my room."

Jimmy slipped out of the room into the street singing happily. He was glad. The old man was blind.

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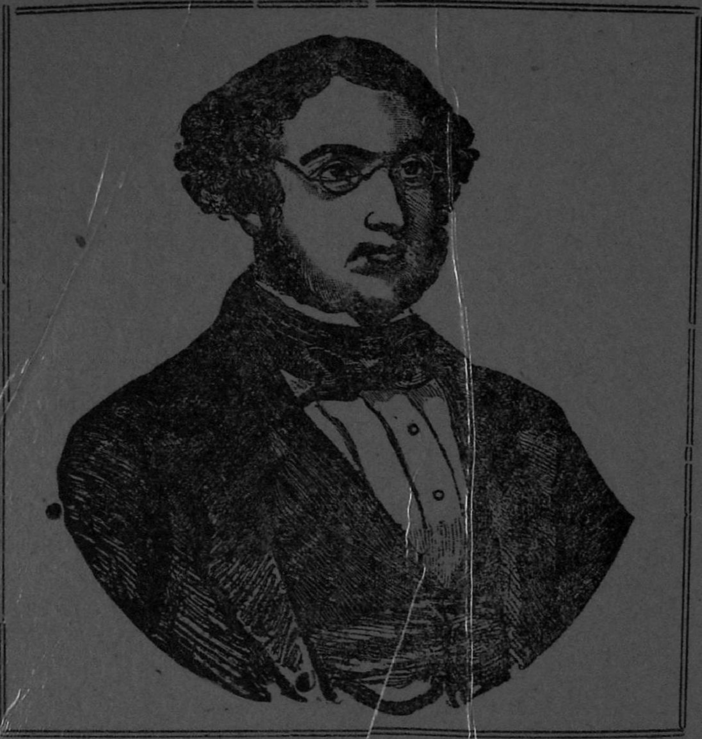

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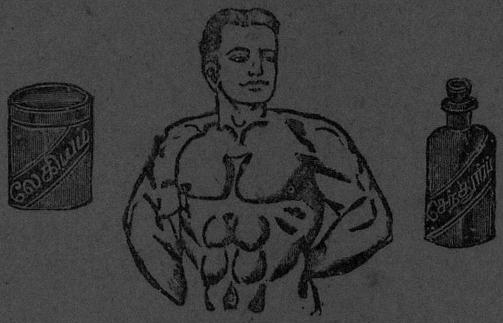

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